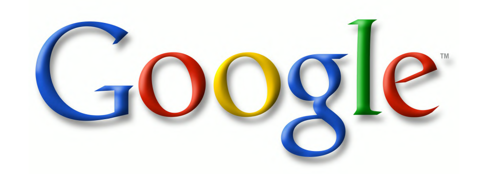
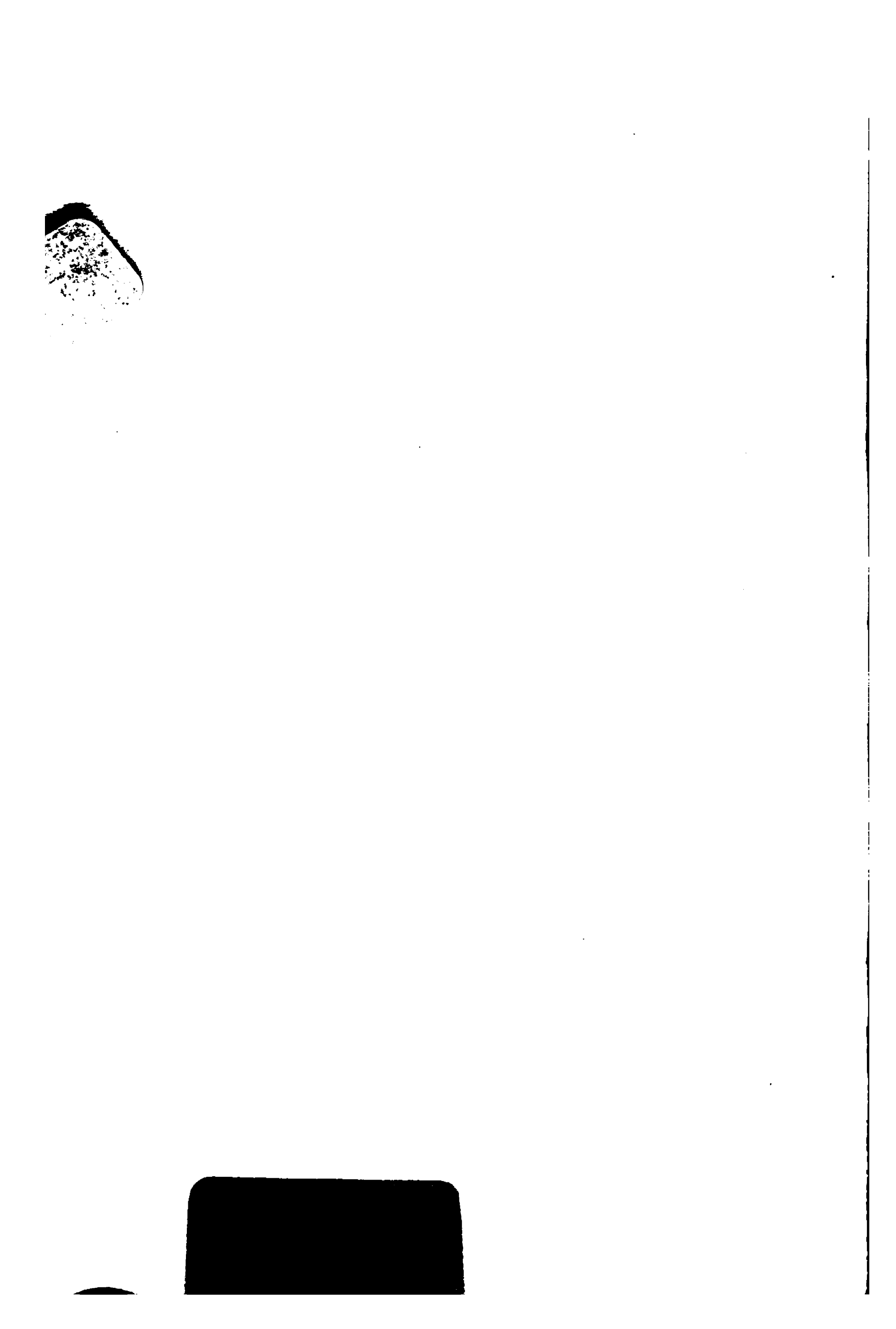
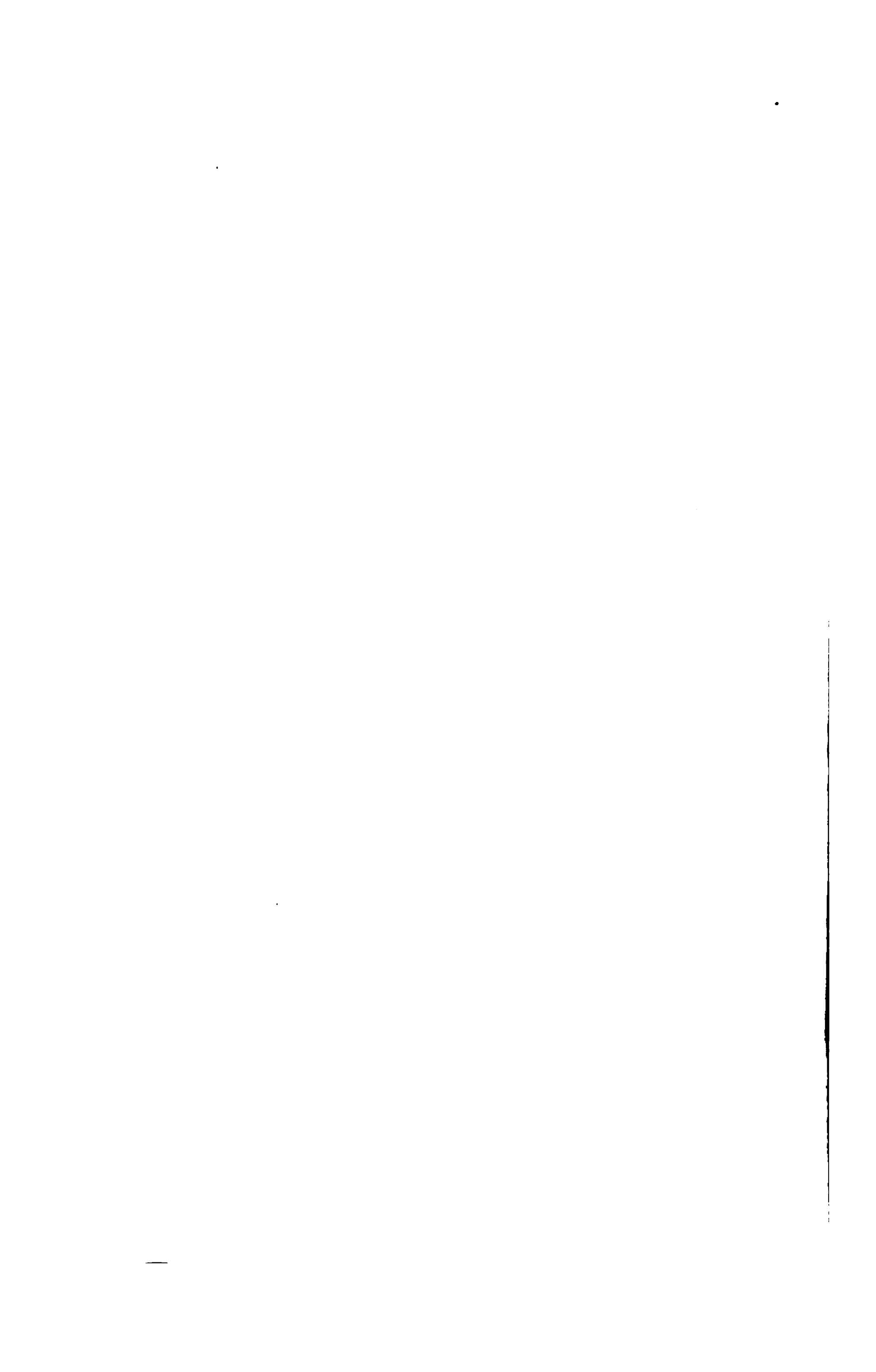






HUNGARY

AND

TRANSYLVANIA;

WITH REMARKS ON THEIR CONDITION,

SOCIAL, POLITICAL AND ECONOMICAL.

BY

JOHN PAGET, ESQ.

Beata Ungheria! se non si lascia
Più malmenare.

DANTE.

From the New London Edition,

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

PHILADELPHIA:
LEA & BLANCHARD.
1850.

WM. S. YOUNG, PRINTER.

TO HER

FOR WHOSE PLEASURE THIS WORK WAS UNDERTAKEN,

BY WHOSE SMILES ITS PROGRESS HAS

BEEN ENCOURAGED,

AND AT WHOSE DESIRE IT IS NOW PUBLISHED,

I DEDICATE IT,

IN TESTIMONY OF MY AFFECTION

AND ESTEEM.

J. P.

PREFACE.

Before proceeding with this work, there are one or two matters which I may as well explain to the reader. Such a mark of my confidence will, I trust, incline him not only to treat me more leniently, but enable him also to judge of me more fairly, and so accuse me only of those faults of which I am really guilty.

I would not willingly deceive him in any thing. I am deeply interested in the welfare of Hungary, and I have thought that one great means of promoting it would be to extend the knowledge of that country in the west of Europe, and more especially in England. But, although I naturally wish that others should partake of the interest which I feel, I have not thought it either just or wise to conceal, or to gloss over, faults existing either in the country, its institutions, or its inhabitants. I know there are those who think that "to write up a country," a traveller should describe every thing in its most favourable light; I am

not of that opinion,—I do not believe that a false impression can ever effect any lasting good.

On the other hand, I must guard my Hungarian friends against the suspicion that I have "set down aught in malice." I know that many of them will feel sufficiently sore at seeing national defects held up to the gaze of foreigners; but I think the wiser of them will easily forgive me, when they reflect that others would have been sure to find out these defects if I had not, and might perhaps have discussed them with less charity. I do not anticipate that my opinions will find favour in the eyes of any party or any sect, but they have been independently formed and honestly expressed: if correct, they may be of some use; if erroneous, they will pass away and be forgotten, without doing much harm. To one merit I may safely lay claim—I have not, in a single instance, betrayed a private confidence, nor, as far as I am aware, written a line which can give just cause of pain to any private individual. I have been admitted into a great number of houses, I have observed the habits and customs of many families; but if any obnoxious remark was to be made, I have always removed it so far from the real scene of action as to render it impossible, even for the most malicious, to trace it to its source. That I have attacked parties and sects, that I have criticized bodies of men and national institutions, and that I have spoken freely of public characters, is true;

but, in having done so, I consider myself responsible to no one; such matters are public property, and fair subjects for public animadversion.

That I have fallen into many errors, I feel certain, —not that I have spared either time or trouble to avoid them; but seeing how many other travellers have committed, which I can detect, I cannot hope that I shall be able to escape clear from their scrutiny. Instead of asking them to spare me, I invite them to correct me. I may smart under the lash, but my object, the elucidation of truth, will be advanced, and if their remarks are made in a fair spirit, I shall not complain.

With respect to the means I enjoyed for acquiring information, I may state that I have visited Hungary on several occasions; that, in all, I have spent about a year and a half in the country, and that, during that time, I have travelled over the greater part of it. Without being able to speak any of the three or four languages properly indigenous to Hungary, I was sufficiently master of German, which is spoken by every one above the rank of the peasantry, and often by them too, to enable me to converse with the Hungarians without difficulty or restraint. From many of them I received the greatest marks of confidence and friendship, and to them I owe it, that I have been able to enter so fully into the present position of Hungarian affairs. That I do not acknowledge these

favours more particularly, by naming those to whom I am obliged, the reader must not suppose the result of ingratitude on my part, as I am silent solely from a wish not to involve any one in the disagreeable consequences which might spring from his supposed agreement with the opinions which I have expressed.

As I have always felt that written descriptions of the physical characteristics of a country and people convey, after all, but imperfect notions of them, I thought myself very fortunate when Mr. Hering agreed to accompany me for the purpose of illustrating whatever might be distinctive, or curious, or beautiful. On my return to England, circumstances occurred which rendered it so doubtful when I should be enabled to complete my work that, anxious that Mr. Hering should have an opportunity to make known his talents, and willing in any way to spread an acquaintance with Hungary among the English, I placed the sketch-book at his disposal, and requested him to make use of it in any way he saw fit. The result has been, the beautiful volume of "Sketches on on the Danube, in Hungary and Transylvania." The reader must not accuse me of plagiarism if he finds strong marks of similarity between some passages of these volumes, and the introductory pages of the "Sketches." At Mr. Hering's request, I wrote for him those short notices of the subjects of his engravings; and I have preferred repeating them here

to breaking the thread of the narrative by referring the reader to another work.

To save the trouble of quoting in the body of the work, the authors from whom I have derived information, and to indicate to such as are desirous of a farther acquaintance with Hungary, the means by which they may acquire it, I add a list of those authors, with the titles of their books, in this place.

Geschichte des Ungarischen Reichs, von Johann Christian von Engel, 5 vols., 8vo., 1834.—Die Geschichte Ungarns, von Dr. J. F. Schneller, 12mo., 1829.—Gemälde von Ungarn, von Johann von Csaplovics, 2 vols., 8vo., 1829.—Neuste statistisch-geographische Beschreibung des Königreichs Ungarn, Croatien, Slavonien und der Ungarischen Militär-grenze, 1 vol., 8vo., 1832.—Erläuterungen der Grundgesetze für die Militär-gränze, von Mathias Stopfer, k. k. Gränz-Werwaltungs-Oberlieutenant, 1 vol., 8vo., 1831.—Ungarns gesetzgebende Körper auf dem Reichstage zu Pressburg im Jahr 1830, von Joseph Orosz, 2 vols., 8vo., 1831.—Terra Incognita, Notizen über Ungarn, von J. Orosz, 1 vol., 8vo., 1835.—Ueber den Credit, vom Grafen Stephan Széchenyi; aus dem Ungarischen übersetzt von Joseph Vojdisek; 2d ed., 1 vol., 8vo., 1830.—Malerische Reise auf dem Waagflusse, von Freyherrn von Mednyánsky, 1 vol., 4to., 1826.—Erzählungen, Sagen, und Legenden aus Ungarns Vorzeit, von Freyherrn, von Mednyánsky, 1 vol., 8vo.,

1829. As guide-book, I always used Rudolph von Jenny's Handbuch für Reisende in dem österreichischen Kaiserstaate, Zweite Auflage, von Adolf Schmidl, 1835. The second volume treats of Hungary, and is a work of great labour and wonderful accuracy. To the English traveller down the Danube, especially if he does not read German, Mr. Murray's "Handbook for Southern Germany," will be found exceedingly useful.

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HUNGARY AND TRANSYLVANIA.

CHAPTER I.

PRESBURG.

Viennese Reports of Hungary.—Presburg.—Castle.—Inhabitants.—Members of the Diet.—Dinner party.—Youth of Hungary.—Theben.—Theatre.—Promenade.—Booksellers.—Journals.

It was about the middle of June, 1835, that we shook the dust of Vienna from our feet, and bent our steps towards the confines of Hungary. Full of the hope of adventure, with which the idea of entering a country familiar only in history or romance fills even older heads than ours, we had been for some days impatient at the dull delays of the Austrian police, and were commensurately rejoiced at their termination, and the actual commencement of our journey.

The reader would certainly laugh, as I have often done since, did I tell him one half the foolish tales the good Viennese told us of the country we were about to visit. No roads! no inns! no police! we must sleep on the ground, eat where we could, and be ready to defend our purses and our lives at every moment! In full credence of these reports, we provided ourselves most plentifully with arms, which were carefully loaded, and placed ready for immediate use; for as we heard that nothing but fighting would carry us through, we determined to put the best face we could on the matter. It may, however, ease the reader's mind to know that no occasion to shoot any thing more formidable than a partridge or a hare ever presented itself; and that we finished our journey with the full conviction, that travelling in Hungary was just as safe as travelling in England.

Why or wherefore, I know not, but nothing can exceed the horror with which a true Austrian regards both Hungary and its inhabitants. I have sometimes suspected that the bugbear

with which a Vienna mother frightens her squaller to sleep, must be an Hungarian bugbear; for in no other way can I account for the inbred and absurd fear which they entertain for such near neighbours. It is true, the Hungarians do sometimes talk about liberty, constitutional rights, and other such terrible things, to which no well-disposed ears should ever be open, and to which the ears of the Viennese are religiously closed. Worthy people! How satisfied must the old emperor, *der gute Franzel*, have been with you! When a certain professor once remonstrated with him on the censorship of the press, and represented it as the certain means of checking the genius of his people, he was answered: "I don't want learned subjects—I want good subjects." As regards the first part of his wish no man had more reason to be contented than the late Emperor of Austria; for a more unintellectual, eating and drinking, dancing and music-loving people do not exist, than the good people of Vienna. As long as they can eat *gebackene Hendel* at the Sperl, or dance in the Augarten, and listen to the immortal Strauss, as he stamps and fiddles before the best waltz band in Europe, so long will they willingly close their ears to all such wicked discourses; and, despite the speculations of philosophers or the harangues of patriots, nothing will ever induce them to desire a change.

Our party consisted, beside myself, of my friend Mr. S——, and Mr. H——; the latter, a young artist. Of ourselves I need say nothing more, as our personality will have little place in our travels. We were provided with a good strong carriage from Brandmeyer's; a preliminary to a journey through Hungary, without which I should recommend no one to attempt it, at least for pleasure. An Italian servant, who had accompanied me through Italy, I was obliged to dismiss; for he was not only useless from his ignorance of the languages of the country, but an absolute incumbrance from his unfitness to put up with the various inconveniencies to which an Hungarian traveller is subject. An Hungarian was soon found to supply his place.

In this guise, after a few hours' posting on the dusty road between Vienna and Presburg, we approached the boundary of Hungary. I proffered my passport, as usual, to the guard who opened the barrier; but it was declined with a polite bow, and an assurance that I was in Hungary and had no longer need of it. I appeal to those who have travelled in Italy and Germany for sympathy with my delight at being once more free from the annoyance of passports, a system of impediment to the honest

traveller, and of protection to the rogue. An efficient police does not require it—a bad one is only rendered more inefficient by its fancied security. My heart beat more gaily in its prison, my blood flowed more freely through my veins, as I blessed the land where some trace of personal liberty still existed.

As we approached Presburg, the huge square castle came in sight; and before long, we were crossing the bridge of boats over the Danube and entering the town.

Presburg is prettily situated along the banks of the Danube; and, for a town of its size, offers a greater number of handsome buildings than are often seen. Our first object after making our arrangements as comfortably as possible at the Goldene Sonne, was to visit the castle. A large square mass of building without architectural ornament, and little relieved by the ill-proportioned towers which protrude themselves from each corner, cannot in itself have much to interest the lover of the picturesque; but from the esplanade before it, a magnificent view opened on us. As far as the eye can reach into Hungary, extends a vast wooded plain, through which the gigantic Danube spreads itself wild and uncontrolled. Sometimes dividing itself into several branches, nearly as wide as the parent stream, it forms large islands of several miles in extent; then collecting its scattered forces, it moves forward in one vast mass of irresistible power, till division again impairs its strength. At our feet lay Presburg itself, and we could distinguish the remains of the gates and walls which marked its former boundaries; these, however, it has long outgrown, and its straggling extremities remind us of the school-boy's arms and legs, which the garments of an earlier age would in vain restrain within their narrow limits.

Of historical association, the castle had little to interest us; indeed, in its present form, it has existed scarcely one hundred years. As late as 1811, it still served as a fortress and barrack for troops, but being unprovided both with wood and water, except what was carried there upon the backs of its occupants, it struck the Italian regiment, by whom it was then held, how very ill it was adapted to the purposes it served. They were just employed in laying in a store of wood, when the idea, equally patriotic and philanthropic, came into their heads of setting fire to the castle, and thus ridding the country of a bad fortress, and saving themselves and their successors from any further trouble in carrying wood and water to such an unreasonable height. So strongly did the idea seize upon their imaginations, that it was no sooner conceived than put in execution, and

its blackened walls still stand a monument to the wit and laziness of the Italian soldiery.

As for sights, few places have less of them than Presburg. In the great church we could discover nothing of interest save a bronze font of elegant workmanship, bearing the date of 1409. The object pointed out with the greatest care to the stranger's notice, is an insignificant elevation on the banks of the Danube, called the Königsberg. It is to this spot that the King of Hungary, at his coronation, clothed in the very dress formerly worn by St. Stephen, and bearing the apostolic crown on his head, rides up his charger; and, striking the sword of state to the four quarters of the world, swears to defend the country from enemies on every side.*

The delivery of letters of introduction, and the consequent formation of acquaintance, cost us but little time, for every where we were received with a kindness which at once forbade us to consider ourselves strangers. The hospitality of the Hungarians is almost proverbial, and, I doubt not, that every foreigner feels its welcome influence; but I am inclined to think that the name of Englishman was not without its recommendation in our favour. I must not, however, anticipate: future events, I think, will prove that I am right.

It was a constant source of amusement for us, during the first days of our arrival, to watch the groups of peasants collected under the windows of the hotel. The neighbourhood of Presburg is chiefly occupied by Sclavacks and Germans, two of the many distinct races by which Hungary is peopled. The reader must not imagine that he is about to visit one people on entering Hungary, but rather a collection of many races, united by geographical position and other circumstances into one nation, but which still preserve all their original peculiarities of language, dress, religion, and manners. The Magyars,† or Hungarians proper, the dominant race, and to whom the land may be said to belong, do not amount to more than three millions and a half out of the ten millions at which the whole population is estimated. The Sclavacks may be reckoned at two millions; other members of the Sclavish race, but differing in religion and dialect, at two

* In Mr. Spencer's work on Circassia, it may be observed, that a similar ceremony is performed by a Circassian prince, who is sent to receive and conduct home his brother's bride; an interesting fact when connected with the Hungarian claim to a Caucasian origin.

† It may be as well to remark at once, that the word Magyar should be pronounced Mŏd-yŏr.

and a half; the rest of the population being made up of Wallacks, Jews, Germans, Gipsies, &c. There is scarcely less difference of religion than of origin in this motley population. The Catholics are predominant, as well in number as in power; but the two sects of Protestants, the Lutherans and Calvinists, and the members of the Greek Church, both united and non-united, are numerous, and enjoy nearly the same rights as the Catholics. The Jews are tolerated on the payment of a tax, but cannot exercise any political functions.

It is easy for an experienced eye to detect these differences at the first glance, though to us they were a puzzle which we were some time in unravelling. We soon became accustomed to the slow, heavy look of the Sclavack peasants as they sauntered about in the sun, with all the lazy nonchalance of the lazzaroni of Naples.

Their women, too, were distinguishable from the white kerchief folded neatly over the head and neck, and the gay blue petticoat with its deep edge of bright red, as they incumbered the street with their baskets of fruit and vegetables. It was curious to see how unconcernedly the generality of them stood to be sketched. One old man, whom H—— caught as he was resting from his labour on his awkward long-handled spade, allowed a limb to be replaced in its former position, when accidentally moved, just as tranquilly as an artist's lay-figure would have done, though he did not seem to have the slightest idea of what was going on.

Another stout fellow, who had been persuaded to sit for his portrait, did not take the affair quite so easily. He grew very much alarmed when he saw the pencils and paper fairly at work, and at last burst into tears, and would fain have run away; he was sure they were "writing him down," to send his description to the Emperor, that he might make a soldier of him. Probably, the poor fellow had run away and hid himself during the last levy of troops, and it may have been a bad conscience that now pricked him. The smart peasants, in tight blue pantaloons, embroidered jackets, and broad hats, ornamented with artificial flowers, we found to be chiefly Germans, who had adopted the Hungarian costume.

As we were leaning out of the window, and amusing ourselves with the picturesque groups formed by these curious figures, and their no less curious teams of four or six small lean horses, and light crazy wagons, a loud knock at the door interrupted

our observations, and in marched a hussar in a very gay uniform and making such martial music in the jingling of his sabre and spurs, that we could scarcely comprehend that he was merely a servant sent to announce the visit of his master, who was waiting below, to know if we were at home. In a few minutes, however, appeared the master himself; and if his servant had astonished us, I leave the reader to guess what was the impression produced upon our minds by a tall, very handsome man, dressed in the most becoming uniform of green and gold, with a mantle richly lined with fur hanging over his shoulders, and which he bore with a grace and elegance of manner rarely to be seen. It was the Baron V——, to whom we had a letter of introduction, and who had called in his uniform of Chamberlain on his way to the palace, to return our yesterday's visit. This was the first time we had ever seen the modern Hungarian costume, and it was impossible not to be struck with its beauty and elegance.

The luxury which many of the Hungarians display in the liveries, or uniforms of their servants, is far beyond any thing of which we can form an idea. Almost every gentleman has a hussar fully armed and equipped as his valet de chambre, and some have all their footmen in the same dress. These uniforms are not unfrequently covered with gold or silver lace. It is startling to a foreigner to find himself served at table by a smart looking hussar, be-whiskered and be-spurred as fiercely as if he were handling a sabre instead of presenting a knife and fork.

We had soon a sufficient number of acquaintances to induce us to fix ourselves for some weeks at Presburg. The diet also was sitting, and many of the most remarkable men of the country were in consequence congregated within the town. A great number of young men, too, either attached to the deputies as secretaries, or terminating their legal studies at the courts, were in Presburg, and gave us a good opportunity of becoming acquainted with the rising generation, the future hopes of Hungary.

Very few of the members of the Diet keep house at Presburg, and, although they have now been nearly three years here, they have contented themselves with the lodgings afforded by the town; for whatever place has the honour of receiving the Diet, has the burden also of quartering its members gratis. We called on one of the magnates the other day, and found his habitation to consist of two very indifferent rooms, the outer serving for antechamber and servants' room, the inner, for his own bedroom and saloon. On the outer door a rude likeness of a sabre was

chalked up, as a sign that a member of the diet lived there. The deputies mostly dine at one of the many restaurants of the town, where a very tolerable dinner may be had for about two shillings. If I may venture to speak of their appearance in general, from what I have observed in these places, and before I confuse myself with individual peculiarities, or become blinded by private friendship, I should say they are a fine manly body; composed in their demeanour, careless in matters of dress, and rather too regardless of those little elegances of manner which distinguish good society in the rest of Europe. Though rather rough, however, they have mostly something *distingué* in their bearing and general appearance.

One of the first dinner parties to which we were invited at Presburg, was at the house of Herr Von P———, and I must not hastily pass it over, for it introduced us to some trifling peculiarities in manner, which, although of such little importance in my eyes, that I seem to require an apology to myself for noticing them, are of a character so vastly interesting to that numerous class of English society, the gentry of the silver fork school, that I feel confident they would never pardon me were I to omit them.

As is the custom, the invitation was verbal, and the hour two o'clock. The drawing-room into which we were ushered was a spacious uncarpeted room, with a well polished floor, on which, I am sorry to say, I observed more than one of the guests very unceremoniously expectorate. Uncarpeted rooms, it may be remarked, though bare to the eye, are pleasant enough in warm climates; indeed, in some houses, where English fashions predominate, I have seen small stools of wood introduced to protect the pretty feet of their mistresses from the heat of the carpet. It is not an uncommon thing for a second-rate French dandy to carry a little *brosse à moustaches* about him, and coolly arrange those material appendages in the street, or at the café; but I was a good deal surprised to see the exquisites of Presburg drawing well-proportioned hair-brushes from their pockets, and performing those operations usually confined in England to the dressing-room, in the presence of a party of ladies, and within the sacred precincts of the drawing-room. But these were trifles compared to the solecisms committed at the dinner table. One of the guests occupied a little spare time between the courses in scraping his nails with a table knife, talking at the same time to the lady next to him, while his *vis-à-vis* was deliberately picking his teeth with a silver fork!

The dinner was most profuse; and, as is usual here, the dishes were carried round to every one in turn, the table being covered with the dessert. I can neither tell the number nor quality of all the courses, for it was quite impossible to eat of the half of them; and many even of those I did taste were new to me. Hungarian cookery is generally savoury, but too greasy to be good. Some of the national dishes, however, are excellent; but the stranger rarely finds them except in the peasant's cottage. The Hungarians, like ourselves, run after bad foreign fashions to the neglect of the good wholesome dishes of their forefathers.

We had abundance of Champagne and Bordeaux, and, as a rarity, some Hungarian wines. I say as a rarity, because in many houses, not a glass of any thing but foreign wine can be obtained. Unfortunately, Hungarian wines are not only good but cheap, and that is enough to prove they cannot be fashionable. After dinner we adjourned to coffee, when pipes were introduced, without a word of remonstrance from the ladies, as if they were the common conclusion of a dinner party: at five o'clock we all left. In more fashionable houses (this was one of a rich country gentleman) the dinner is rather later; the spitting confined to a sand-dish, set in the corner for that purpose; the cookery more decidedly French or German; the guests more stiff and correct, but, perhaps on that account, less agreeable; and the smoking banished from the drawing-room to the sanctum of the host.*

I think I may say, without exception, that of the young men whom I met at Presburg, there was not one who did not hold liberal opinions on politics. There are many peculiarities, however, in the present circumstances of Hungary, and the position of the nobles, to which class these young men belong, which render their liberalism, in some respects, very different from ours. Without any very accurate knowledge of the political or commercial position either of their own country or of that of their neighbours, they are fully persuaded that Austria is at the root of all the evils they suffer, and they consequently regard that power with fear and hatred. No radical in England can inveigh more violently against taxation than do the liberals of Hungary; but they mix up their invective so strangely with the privileges of nobility, that it would be difficult to recognise any thing like

* I do not allude to such houses as those of the princess G——, or the Baron O——, where the manners are European, not national.

the same principle in their opposition to it. In fact they do not distinguish very clearly between the words right and privilege.

It is difficult even for the strongest conviction to overcome the habits and feelings of early education. I am sure these gentlemen are anxious for the freedom and education of the peasantry, and yet it often appeared to us that they spoke of them, and to them, as though they belonged to a different class of creation from themselves; in short, all of them are reformers, but many of them seem eminently impractical in the ideas of reform.

Not that I saw any thing of that revolutionary spirit at which Austria seems so terribly alarmed, and which German strangers often attribute to the Hungarians, because they talk loudly and openly of matters which their neighbours dare not even whisper; on the contrary, I believe there is among them a stronger feeling of loyalty to their king, and love for their institutions as they are, than is to be found in almost any other part of Europe. Among a considerable number, though equally liberal with the more noisy, a tone of moderation prevails, which argues well for the future. These seem willing to obtain all that is possible, and make the most of that, leaving the desirable but unattainable for other times and more favourable circumstances.

Most of those we have met here, have been educated entirely in Hungary; indeed, have never been from home except for an occasional visit to Vienna. They all speak Hungarian and German, and some of them French and English. In manners they are more simple, perhaps less polished, than Englishmen of the same rank and age. In scholastic learning, at least as far as Latin is concerned, they are our equals, and our superiors in a minute knowledge of the laws of their own country; for the Corpus Juris forms an essential part of every Hungarian gentleman's education. In general literary acquirements, in scientific information, in an acquaintance with the fine arts, and, above all, in a knowledge of the first principles, even of political economy, I think they are our inferiors. There is a friendly warmth in their manner, an air of sincerity and frankness in all they say and do, and a total absence of affectation, which rendered their society truly agreeable to us. As for that fear of speaking out their minds, which the Englishman so often sees and regrets among other nations of the Continent, the Hungarians are quite as free from it as ourselves. They may be surrounded by spies and police, but they certainly take very little heed of them.

The amusements of Presburg, at least in the summer, when

most of the ladies have retired to the country, are confined to the theatre, the arena, and the promenade in the Au. This latter is a large piece of ground, on the opposite side of the river to Presburg, formerly overflowed by the Danube, but which has been drained and planted in the English style, and now forms a really pretty park. I cannot say that the promenade is pleasant, at least to those with tender skins; for the swarms of musquitoes with which we were covered whenever we attempted to walk there, quickly drove us away.

On the other side of Presburg, however, nothing can be more beautiful than the walks and rides among gentle hills, covered with orchards and vineyards, which extend for many miles towards the north and west. A few miles up the river lies the pretty village of Theben, with its romantic castle; a common Sunday's resort for the good citizens of Presburg. As some of our Hungarian friends offered to accompany us to Theben, a party was made up, and we started on foot one fine morning to spend the day there. The weather was excessively hot, and it took us two hours, as we sauntered along the banks of the river —now stopping to examine the rocks, now to get a view of some beautiful bend of the Danube,—before we reached the village. We passed several stone quarries, from which a fine-grained granite is obtained for paving-stones, which are chiefly sent to Pest; and we were told that at a little distance excellent slates are found, which are used for house-tiles. Nothing can wear a more happy appearance than Theben; the cottages look clean and comfortable, and the principal street is shaded by a fine avenue of walnut trees. The peasants are generally vine growers, holding their land of the Count Pálffy, for which they pay a rent partly in money and partly in kind.

After ordering our dinner at a little inn near the river, we mounted the hill on which stand the ruins of the old castle. These are finely situated on a rock of black limestone, overlooking the Danube and the March, which unite their waters just under the crumbling walls. A castle of such strength as Theben once was, placed on the borders of two countries so often at war as Hungary and Austria, must have played an important part in the history of former times. The upper part of the castle is now a mere ruin; its destruction is said to have been the effect of wanton mischief on the part of the French troops in 1809.

An interesting legend is connected with the slender tower still remaining perfect, and which hangs over the river, and commands

the narrow passage cut in the rock beneath. A gay young knight, who dwelt in Theben many years ago, fell in love with one of the nuns of a neighbouring convent, carried her off, and made her his wife. To protect himself from the vengeance of the Church, whose rage this act of sacrilege had roused, he shut himself up in his strong castle, determined to defend his lady-love to the last extremity. Though unable to take the castle by force, the troops of the Church continued their blockade till starvation rendered it impossible to hold out longer. Unwilling to be separated from her he loved, and by whom his love was returned,—for the nun was no unwilling bride,—and too well acquainted with the character of his enemy to expect mercy or forgiveness,—the knight of Theben led his mistress along the narrow ledge of rock which connects the solitary tower with the castle, gained its narrow stair and ascended to the battlements. One moment the lovers, locked in each other's arms, were seen to linger on the precipice,—the next, and the Danube had buried in its thick waters two as fond hearts as ever beat. If cruel bigotry forbade that they should live together, its power failed to separate them in death.

Having examined the castle, our party separated in pursuit of their different tastes and occupations. H—— sat down to get a view of the ruins; Professor S—— shouldered his geological hammer, and set off for a fossiliferous rock* in the neighbourhood; and I submitted myself to the guidance of young Count S—— and M——, the deputy for W——, who conducted me along the banks of the March to Schlosshof.

The imperial palace of Schlosshof is a large building, very plainly furnished, and remarkable only as having been formerly the residence of Prince Eugene, and more recently of the Duke de Reichstadt. On our return we found H—— with a sketch of the solitary tower, the professor with his bag stored with specimens, Prince H—— P——, who had promised to spend the day with us, already arrived, and the whole party well prepared, though scarcely past mid-day, to do full justice to the

* The geological character of these rocks is curious. The range of the little Carpathians, which runs north from this point, is composed of granite, in which large gangs of mica slate, chlorite slate, &c., frequently occur. At Theben, a black limestone is seen mixed with slate and quartz which is not stratified, and bearing strong marks of being an igneous production. At a little distance occurs a soft new limestone, containing fossils of mammalia, reptiles, and shells.

roast fowls and pancakes, of which our dinner was composed. A row down to Presburg in the evening in one of the clumsy boats, which serve for wherries on the Danube, concluded a very pleasant day's excursion.

The theatre of Presburg is as essentially German as any of those at Vienna. Though the regular company is but indifferent, we were fortunate enough to be there at the same time with Madame Schroeder,* the best tragic actress on the German stage. This lady is now far from young: some say she is sixty years of age, though I can hardly believe it, for she seems still possessed of all her power: we saw her in Lady Macbeth, Medea, Schiller's Braut von Messina, and other pieces, and I do not think it possible that the representation of strong passion can be more perfectly given than by Madame Schroeder. The scene in the Braut von Messina, in which she first sees her dead son, is perhaps the very finest piece of acting I ever saw.

Near the Au is an arena, or theatre in the open air, which, as the price of entrance is very low, and the gentlemen are allowed their pipes, is a fashionable lounge in the summer evenings. It requires all the attractions of the open air to render this place tolerable; for the pieces, half farce, half pantomime, are coarse and stupid in the extreme. I was struck by the observation of a sturdy patriot, near whom I happened to be standing, when some indecent innuendo drew from him a long puff of smoke and a "——*Teremtette*," that "if the government would occupy itself with restraining such exhibitions as these, which stultify and demoralize the spectators, and substitute something better for them, it might find plenty to do without instituting processes against every man who wishes to raise the people to the common rights and privileges of humanity."

As we returned from the arena, and were quietly discussing an ice at one of the cafés on the public walk, our companions pointed out to us some of the most important personages then in Presburg, who were enjoying the cool evening air, after the feverish debates of the morning in the chambers. There they were, simple deputies, proud magnates, and stately bishops, passing and repassing under the pleasant shade of the acacias, as their names, titles, and dignities, were made known to us. The most part of them soon escaped our memories, for the public men of Hungary, as well as the affairs of the country, are so little known

* Madame Schroeder, the tragic actress of Vienna, must not be confounded with her daughter, Madame Schroeder Devrient, the well-known prima donna of Dresden.

in England, that almost every name was new to us. One person, however, particularly arrested our attention: he was a man of about the middle height, but formed in an Herculean mould. A large quantity of black hair and beard almost concealed his features, but a strongly marked nose, and a deeply sunk, yet most brilliant eye, were sufficient to indicate no ordinary character. It was the Baron Wesselényi Miklós, the leader of the ultra-liberal party, and then under trial for high treason. I never saw a countenance more expressive of serious thought, high moral courage, and determined resolution. If there be any truth in physiognomy, the government will gain little by persecuting such a man as Baron Wesselényi. We were much struck with the respect with which every one seemed to regard him; scarce a hat but was raised as he passed; and among the young men it was easy to perceive looks of the deepest interest and admiration.

It was curious to listen to the different salutations of the promenaders. There was every variety, from the simple "*wie geht's*" of the German trader, to the pompous "*servus, domine spectabilis*" of the Catholic priests. The Hungarian generally contents himself with a "*servus, barátam;*" a mixture of Latin and Magyar, from which, though he makes the greatest efforts, he cannot quite escape. Among the churchmen, Latin is still sometimes the medium of conversation; among the nobles, Magyar or German is most common; and among the ladies, German or French. The trading classes, of course, speak the language of the people amongst whom they happen to be, but I believe all commercial correspondence is carried on in German.

I have often thought that a glance at the booksellers' shops gives a more correct idea of the state of education in a country, than the most profound disquisitions on its schools and universities. If my notion is correct, Presburg ought to rank pretty high in literary estimation; for in a tour which we made one day through the warehouses of five or six of the chief booksellers, we were astonished at the number and excellence of the books they contained. They were not only rich in Hungarian and German works, but contained almost every thing of any great merit published in London and Paris. A fair library, both of the French and English classics, might easily be formed in Presburg. Of the English standard works, we found editions of London, Paris, and Leipsic, but chiefly the latter. There appeared to be a great want of children's books, though Miss Edgeworth's "Moral

Tales," and "The Boy's own Book," were among the few we observed.

It is but lately that the Hungarian publishers have ventured to undertake works in the Hungarian language, but they do so now with considerable boldness. Politics and political economy are the subjects of greatest interest to the Hungarians at the present moment, and therefore those most written on. Count Széchenyi's works are among the most popular. A "Penny Magazine" has been established, but I believe it has not answered so well as was anticipated. There are two political newspapers published at Presburg, which appear twice a week; one in German, the "Presburger Zeitung;" and the other in Latin, the "Ephemeredes Posoniensis," chiefly supported by the Sclavack priesthood. In the latter of these I was much amused to find one of Joseph Hume's pounds, shillings, and pence speeches translated into flowing Latin. Neither of these journals enjoys a very high reputation.

At Pest, there are two political journals, each accompanied by a sheet dedicated to literature and the arts; the best is the "Jelenkor" (Present Time,) which is got up in a very creditable manner, and is said to be conducted with considerable talent. It has a circulation of four thousand. Count Széchenyi writes frequently in the literary sheet "Társalkodó," (Converser) of this paper. Besides these there are two literary periodicals, one monthly, and one quarterly; and also a journal of fashions, and a German paper published at Buda. The leaden hand of the censor, though less heavy here than at Vienna, weighs down the free expression of opinion in these journals, and is regarded by the Hungarians as a most unjust and oppressive imposition.

CHAPTER II.

THE DIET OF 1835.

Ball-room Studies.—Chamber of Deputies.—Deák.—Debate on Wesselényi's Process.—Kossúth.—MS. Journal.—Prorogation.—Tour to the Neusiedler Lake.—Posting.—Bauern Post.—Lake.—Ruszt and its Wine.—Prince Eszterházy's Palaces.—Eisenstadt.—Eszterház.—Haydn.—Wild Boy.—Castle of Forchtenstein.—Eszterházy Jewels.—Watchman at Œdenburg.

"What, not yet ready?" said young S——, as he entered our room at Presburg, and found us still occupied with dressing and coffee, operations which our German travels had taught us to unite: "it is ten o'clock, and the lower chamber has been sitting this hour past: you must be quick, for they rarely remain later than one."

The fact was, we had been persuaded the night before by some of our wilder friends, whose philosophy taught them, that to know all, one must see all,—forgetting that it was still a question whether all was worth knowing,—to visit one of those balls in the suburbs of Presburg, where a few kreutzers give entrance to the gentlemen, and the ladies pay nothing. This fashionable re-union for wicked 'prentices and gallant artillery men—the latter always the most esteemed on such occasions, in spite of their ugly uniform, because their extra pay gives their fair partners a better chance of a supper,—was held at the sign of the *Hechtel*, where we found a motley ring of dancers hard at work—I say hard at work, for such it was; no mincing delicately-paced quadrilles, but honest hard waltzing and gallopading, such as fully to excuse the gentlemen for dispensing with their coats, and to afford ample cause for the ladies resting, because they were "*ganz nass!*" as they elegantly expressed it.

Except some variations—rather marked ones it is true,—in the conventional modes of society, there is little difference between the drawing-room and the *Hechtel;* the same flirtations are to be witnessed in the former as in the latter place, and they are scarcely more decent or less interested; the dresses, too, are

equally low; the dancing often worse; and the whole thing, if possible, less rational, because less amusing. The women were pretty, but apparently rather more addicted to flirting than their beaux seemed willing to permit; and as some of our party were more gallant than wise, I am not sure but we might have had rather a disagreeable proof of Hungarian mettle had we not beaten a timely retreat. And so our philosophical studies at the *Hechtel* had detained us till late in the evening, and we found ourselves next morning somewhat behind-hand in keeping our appointment to attend a sitting of the Diet.

Making, however, every possible haste to suit the hours of these early legislators, we arrived in pretty good time at the gates of a large plain building, where the meetings of the upper and lower chambers of the Hungarian Diet are held. As we ascended the stairs, the hussars—the town police of Presburg—on guard, presented arms to our friend, as he wore the national uniform, and gave us admittance to a small gallery which runs half round the building. The lower chamber, which we had now entered is a long, plain hall, traversed in nearly its whole length by two tables covered with green baize, at which the deputies were seated with pens, ink, and paper before them. At the upper end, there is a raised part occupied by the president, or Personal,* the vice-president and secretary, and behind these sit the judges of the royal table. The chamber had rather a sombre appearance; the bare white-washed walls and the black dresses of the members,—they were all in mourning for the Emperor—rendering it much more like our St. Stephen's than the brilliant Chambre des Députés of our gayer neighbours.

As we entered the chamber, not a sound was to be heard except the deep impassioned tones of Deák, who was listened to with the greatest attention. Deák is one of the best speakers, and has one of the most philosophical heads in the Diet. Heavy and dull in appearance, it is not till he warms with his subject that the man of talent stands declared. He spoke in Hungarian, and I was much struck with the sonorous, emphatic, and singularly clear character of the language. From the number of words ending in consonants, particularly in *k*, every word is distinctly marked even to the ear of one totally unacquainted with the language. I cannot characterize the Hungarian as either soft or musical, but it is strong, energetic, manly; the intonation

* Personalis presentiæ regis, locum tenens.

with which it is utterèd, gives it in ordinary conversation a melancholy air, but when impassioned, nothing can exceed it in boldness.

The subject of debate was a remonstrance proposed to be presented to the Emperor against the illegal proceedings of the Government in the case of Baron Wesselényi, or rather as to the manner in which such remonstrance should be presented, whether immediately from the Diet, or through the mediation of the Palatine. The prosecution of the Baron had excited throughout the whole country, as well as in the Diet, an intense feeling of indignation, as it was considered the most daring attack Government had ever ventured to make upon the right of liberty of speech enjoyed by the Hungarian nobles, and not even the voice of the most unblushing sycophant of the court was raised in defence of its legality.

Baron Wesselényi Miklós is a man of great talent and energy, and gifted with the most impassioned eloquence; he has distinguished himself chiefly as the leader of the opposition in Transylvania, and acquired the hatred of Government from the victory he gained over them in a chamber more than half of which was nominated by themselves. On the sudden dissolution of the Transylvanian Diet, Wesselényi passed into Hungary, and appeared, when least expected, at a country meeting held in Szatmár, where the electors were met to frame instructions for their deputies, as to the vote they should give on the important question of granting equal rights before the law to the oppressed peasantry. The jealousy felt by the lowest of the nobles against the extension of any of those privileges to the peasants, by the enjoyment of which alone they are distinguished from them, had been fomented to the highest degree. Aware of the vast importance of this question to the future happiness of his country, Wesselényi used his utmost power to convince the electors how closely the true interests of peasant and noble are allied, how certainly the acquisition of just rights by the one would increase the wealth and power of the other, and more than all, how the union of both would consolidate the discordant interests by which Hungary is divided, into one strong and powerful nation. In the name of eight millions of their oppressed countrymen he called on them for justice, he demanded that equal rights before the law should be extended to all, and that the burdens of the State should be borne by them equally with the peasants. In the course of his speech he alluded to the policy so universally

charged against the Austrian Government in Hungary, of exciting the nobles against the peasants, and the peasants against the nobles; of teaching each other to regard the other as their natural enemies, in order by division to weaken both, and thus strengthen herself; and he stigmatized in strong terms so treacherous a policy, the ultimate object of which could only be the degradation and slavery of the whole country. His words were received with cheers; and, excepting the Vice Ispán, (an officer equivalent to our Sheriff,) who objected to such language as too strong, no one dreamed of contradicting what all felt to be true. Such, at least, is the account of the matter as it was related to us.

Two months after this meeting,* when Wesselényi had taken his seat as a Hungarian magnate, Government commenced an action against him for these words as treasonable, and put him upon trial for his life. From one end of the country to the other a universal cry of shame arose against so unprecedented an injustice. Remonstrances were prepared in every county; all business was interrupted at the Diet; Balogh, the member for Bárs, declared in his place, "that he should not consider himself guilty of any great crime if he adopted the very words of Wesselényi;" with thoughtless precipitancy he was included in the prosecution; the whole Diet protested against such an invasion of the freedom of speech; the county of Bárs declared that Balogh had done no more than express the sentiments of his constituents, who took on themselves all the consequences of his speech; Government knew not which way to turn; private overtures were made to Wesselényi of immediate pardon if asked, and were indignantly rejected; the chamber drew up a strong remonstrance, and all which the followers of Government dared to do, was to hope that it might be presented to the throne through the mediation of the Palatine.

This remonstrance was the subject of debate during the sitting at which we were present. When Deák finished speaking, and the cheers had subsided, a tall loud-voiced man arose, who was very differently received: a half laugh, half sneer, and a return to private conversation among the deputies, declared him a person not only unpopular, but unrespected by his opponents. It

* Wesselényi disputes the right of Government to proceed against him at all, as by law nothing said at a public meeting can be carried before another tribunal unless the president or some member of that meeting objects to the expression and commences a verbal process, as it is called, at the time the words are uttered.

was the renegade from liberalism, P——, who, a few months later, was recalled by his constituents and dismissed from his post for not having expressed their sentiments or obeyed their instructions.

Kossúth, a young man of considerable promise, spoke next. He was content with two or three sentences, declaring strongly his opinion, and the side on which he should vote. It is often the case that a man rises, expresses in a few words the wishes of his constituents, and sits down, leaving the debate to the more experienced orators.* Indeed it is in this manner the votes are taken, every member's name being called over in turn, when he simply announces his opinion, or speaks at length, as he pleases. Long speeches, however, are by no means the fashion, and I have heard a man who had spoken for two hours, accused of having committed a most unpardonable offence. What most struck me, and later observations have proved the truth of the remark, was the extraordinary fluency with which every one spoke. Of the higher qualities of their oratory, of course, I cannot speak, for no translation can convey the spirit of the original; indeed, I am quite sure the best parts were always lost to me, for every now and then my interpreter's eyes glistened, his attention was doubled, and in vain I asked him what was said; he was too deeply interested to hear me.

Kossúth has been most usefully employed during the Diet. Government, in spite of the law of Hungary, in spite of the protests of the Diet, forbids the publication of the debates, and maintains here, as elsewhere in the Austrian dominions, a strict censorship. That the represented might have some idea as to how their representatives performed their duty, Kossúth undertook to report the debates, which are copied out by innumerable secretaries, and thus circulated in manuscript over the whole of Hungary.† It is extraordinary that none of our newspapers, greedy

* The most distinguished speakers in this Diet were Deák, Nagy, Beöthy, and Kölcsey.

† Since the dissolution of the Diet, I regret to say, that this gentleman has been thrown into prison. It is one of the privileges of the Hungarian noble, that he cannot be imprisoned before trial, except in case of high treason; but, in spite of this, M. Kossúth has been deprived of his liberty. I believe his chief guilt, in the eyes of the Government, was his having circulated in MS. in the same manner as he formerly gave publicity to the transactions of the Diet, reports of the county meetings in various parts of Hungary. The additional strength which this plan would have conferred on the municipal or popular power, by the union and combination it would

as they are for information, should ever have given any report of these debates; nor, indeed, ever have had a correspondent in Presburg; as for trusting to one in Vienna, it would be as reasonable to expect news of Poland in St. Petersburg: none can be more ignorant of what takes place in Hungary than the Viennese.

Unruly as the meetings for the election of members are said to be, nothing can be more orderly than the meetings of the members themselves. Their uniform gives them an air of considerable dignity. Personal altercation is almost unknown; and although a tribunal exists for settling at once such cases, should they arise, no instance has occurred for more than forty years. I would not have it understood that the debates are not animated; it would be difficult they should be otherwise with an enthusiastic and warm-blooded people like the Magyars. But if the Diet is not enlivened by those yells, coughs, shufflings, and catcalls, by which certain senators we know of are accustomed to express their dissent to a proposition, or their impatience for dinner,— there is still sufficient difference between the reception of a Nagy, or an A—— to declare to the merest stranger which is the most heeded and respected, although the other is allowed to speak, however little he may be attended to.

I need scarcely say that the question was carried in favour of the liberal party by a triumphant majority. At one P. M. the sitting was closed, and the deputies retired to their lodgings, changed their uniforms for an ordinary civil costume, and half an hour later we met many of them again round the dinner tables of the Goldene Sonne.

On the morrow, we heard that the Diet was not likely to meet again for some days, or perhaps weeks; for the strong opposition which had been offered to the measures of Government had produced a considerable sensation in Vienna; and it was

have produced, is immense, and probably alarmed the higher powers. Kossúth is accused of having reported the proceedings of the meetings incorrectly; and he answers, that not having been present, he only copied what was reported to him. The whole proceedings in this case are considered as arbitrary and unjust in the highest degree, and have excited the greatest indignation throughout the country. Government wished to make the lawyers employed to defend Kossúth promise not to divulge the circumstances of the trial; not a single member of the bar could be found so base as to obey their behests. Kossúth has been condemned to four years' imprisonment in addition to two years passed in prison previously to trial! (1839.)

supposed some time would be taken for the consideration of what measures it would be politic to pursue in consequence.

In the mean time, the weather was too fine to be lost; and we, therefore, determined to make some excursions into the country, and see what we could of this part of Hungary before troubling our heads any further with politics.

It was at six o'clock in the morning, that the smart Presburg post-boy sounded his bugle, to express his impatience at the half hour we had already kept him waiting ere we started for the Neusiedler Lake, in the neighbourhood of which we intended to pass a few days. The journey to the end of the lake might be some sixty miles, and we reckoned to accomplish it by post within the day.

Of all the modes of travelling in Hungary, the post is the most expensive, and to me, at least, the most disagreeable. The supply of horses is too scanty, and if the traveller happens to arrive before or after the *post wagen*, he must generally wait some time before he can obtain the number he requires. There is an awkward rule, too, which it is well a stranger should know. If he arrives at any place with post, he can oblige the post-master to send him on with the same number of horses he arrived with; but should he, as occurred to us on the present occasion, feel a wish to leave the post-road, and for that purpose hire private horses, at the next post-station they may refuse him a supply, or oblige him to take as many as they choose.

It was at Gschies we learned this rule; for the post-master stoutly refused to send us on with a pair of horses, which was all we had previously required, and declared we should either take four or remain where we were. Entirely ignorant as I then was of any other means of getting forward, I at last consented, and desired him to give us the four horses. "But I have only three in the stable at present," was his cool reply; "and you may either take those and pay for four, or you may remain where you are till to-morrow, when the others will come home." Nor is this the only instance of gross imposition I could relate. The worst of it is that there is no redress; in one case I applied to the judge and notary of the village, and though they had the best will to protect me, all they could do was to give me peasants' horses, and so enable me to avoid the like treatment for the rest of the journey.

For the matter of speed, you get on by post at about the rate of five miles an hour, with strong large horses, and post-boys

wearing huge cocked-hats, each with a plume of feathers worthy a field-marshal, and a red coat with purple facings. But if ever the reader should have occasion to go from Vienna to Pest, and is an amateur of driving, I recommend him to what is called the *bauern post*, that is, if steamboats and rail-roads have not, ere this, entirely destroyed it.

The peasants between the frontiers of Hungary and Pest, on the great high road from Vienna, combined to supply relays of horses at a cheaper rate and better than the royal post; and though at first opposed by Government, they eventually succeeded so well that at present the whole line is supplied by them almost exclusively. The pace at which these men with their four small horses take on a light Vienna carriage is something wonderful, especially when the length of some of their stages is considered. The last stage cannot be less than forty miles from Pest, and with a short pause of about a quarter of an hour to water, they do it for the most part at full gallop, and with the same horses, in four hours. It is glorious to see the wild-looking driver, his long black hair floating in the wind as he turns round to ask your admiration when his four little clean-boned nags are rattling over hill and hollow in a style which for the first time since he left home shakes an Englishman's blood into quicker circulation. There is certainly a pleasure in rapid motion which has on some men almost an intoxicating effect.

But to return to our five miles an hour. We passed through a well cultivated country chiefly inhabited by Germans, who have crept in upon this side of Hungary from Presburg, nearly to the borders of Croatia. The Neusiedler Lake, or the Fertö Tava Hungarian, which we soon came in sight of, is about twenty-four miles long by twelve broad, varying in depth from nine to thirteen feet. In parts, particularly at the north end, its shores are hilly, and pretty, but on the eastern side they are flat, and terminate in a very extensive marsh, called the Hanság.

It is supposed to be this lake which the Emperor Galerius drained into the Danube, and which has been allowed to re-form by the destruction of the Roman works. There is little doubt, I believe, as to the practicability of draining the lake again if it were desired; but, as a neighbouring proprietor observed, it would spoil some glorious snipe-shooting. The water is said to have a salt taste, though I must confess I could not perceive it, and to contain sulphate, muriate, and carbonate of soda. It is well supplied with fish, chiefly carp and pike. From the Hanság bog a

considerable number of leeches* are obtained which are exported to France.

About midway down the lake, and close upon its shore, is the little royal free town of Ruszt, a venerable Hungarian Old Sarum. The poor inhabitants of its one hundred and fifty-two houses send their deputies to the Diet as well as Pest or Presburg. The small hill which rises behind the town constitutes its chief wealth; for it is here the celebrated Ruszter wine is grown, one of the best of the many good wines of Hungary. From what they gave us in the small inn here, or from what I have tasted in other places of the kind, I should not have formed a very high opinion of its excellence; but I once met with a specimen in a private house, fully deserving the highest eulogiums of its admirers. It is a strong, rather dry, pale red wine, and possesses an agreeable flavour quite peculiar to itself. Most of the best Ruszter is said to be exported to Breslau, where it fetches a high price.

A little beyond Ruszt is the Margaretha hill, where the stone, so much used in Vienna for building, is quarried. It is a soft new limestone, much like that of the Paris basin, of a good colour, but somewhat loose in texture. In some parts it is quite filled with an Ostrea and Pecten, the latter peculiar to this place, and named from it. It overlies the granite on which the vineyards of Ruszt are formed. The same formation occurs in several parts of the little Carpathians beyond Presburg.

At Eisenstadt, some short distance from the lake, is a palace of the first of the Hungarian magnates, Prince Eszterházy. This palace, though not remarkable for its beauty (it is in a heavy, though florid, Italian style,) is well fitted for a princely residence. We walked through suites of apartments, innumerable; but by far the most striking of them was the great ball-room—an elegantly proportioned hall of great size, and richly ornamented in white and gold. This room was last used when the present prince was installed Lord Lieutenant of the county of Œdenburg,—an office hereditary in his family; and great is still the fame of the almost regal pomp with which he fêted the crowds of nobles who flocked around him upon that occasion.

* Leeches are found in some other parts of Hungary, but the chief supply of the European markets is obtained from Bessarabia, Servia, and Bulgaria. The leeches are collected in the immense bogs of these countries, and from thence sent to fixed stations, where they remain in tanks till the French and German leech-merchants arrive and transport them by post-carriages to Paris and Hamburg.

The gardens, laid out in the English style, are very fine, and the hot-houses larger than any I remember to have seen; even Alton must bow to Eisenstadt. They contain no less than seventy thousand exotics, and are particularly rich in New Holland specimens. One can hardly help lamenting that so much luxury and beauty should be wasted; for except the inhabitants of Eisenstadt, to whom the gardens are always open, it is rarely the palace or its grounds receive a visiter.

Great as is the splendour of some of our English peers, I almost fear the suspicion of using a traveller's license, when I tell of Eszterházy's magnificence. Within a few miles of this same spot, he has three other palaces of equal size.

Just at the southern extremity of the lake stands Eszterház; a huge building in the most florid Italian style, built only in 1700, and already uninhabited for sixty years. Its marble halls, brilliant with gold and painting, are still fresh as when first built. The chamber of Maria Theresa is unchanged since the great Queen reposed there; the whole interior is in such a state that it might be rendered habitable to-morrow, but the gardens are already overgrown with weeds, and have almost lost their original form; the numberless pleasure-houses are yielding to the damp position in which they are placed, and are fast crumbling away; while the beautiful theatre, for which an Italian company was formerly maintained, is now stripped of its splendid mirrors, and serves only as a dwelling for the dormant bats, which hang in festoons from its gilded cornices. England is famous for her noble castles, and her rich mansions; yet we can have little idea of a splendour such as Eszterház must formerly have presented. Crowded as it was by the most beautiful women of four countries, —its three hundred and sixty strangers' rooms filled with guests, —its concerts directed by a Haydn,—its opera supplied by Italian artists,—its gardens ornamented by a gay throng of visiters, —hosts of richly clothed attendants thronging its antechambers, —and its gates guarded by the grenadiers* of its princely master,—its magnificence must have exceeded that of half of the royal courts of Europe! I know of nothing but Versailles, which gives one so high a notion of the costly splendour of a past age, as Eszterház.

Haydn was for more than thirty years *maestro di capello* to Prince Eszterházy; and, during that period, lived chiefly with

* Prince Eszterházy has still one hundred and fifty guards in his own pay and uniform, who do duty at his different castles and palaces.

the family. His portrait is still preserved, and it is almost the only picture of much interest the palace contains. Haydn was a very poor and obscure person when he was appointed one of the prince's band; so much so, that no one thought even of giving the necessary orders for his being admitted into the palace. The following anecdote of his introduction to the prince is recounted by Oarpani:—

"The Maestro Friedberg, a friend and admirer of Haydn, lived with Prince Eszterházy. Regretting that Haydn should be overlooked, he persuaded him to compose a symphony worthy of being performed on the birthday of his highness. Haydn consented; the day arrived; the prince, according to custom, took his seat in the midst of his court, and Friedberg distributed the parts of Haydn's symphony to the performers. Scarcely had the musicians got through the first allegro, when the prince interrupted them to ask who was the author of so beautiful a piece. Friedberg dragged the modest trembling Haydn from a corner of the room into which he had crept, and presented him as the fortunate composer. "What," cried the prince, as he came forward, "that Blackymoor!" (Haydn's complexion was none of those which mock the lily's whiteness.) "Well, blacky, from henceforth you shall be in my service: what's your name?" "Joseph Haydn." "But you are already one of my band; how is it I never saw you here before?" The modesty of the young composer closed his lips, but the prince soon put him at his ease. "Go and get some clothes suitable to your rank,—don't let me see you any more in such a guise; you are too small; you look miserablé, sir; get some new clothes, a fine wig with flowing curls, a lace collar, and red heels to your shoes. But mind, let your heels be high, that the elevation of your person may harmonize with that of your music. Go, and my attendants will supply you with all you want." . . . The next day Haydn was travestied into a gentleman. Friedberg often told me of the awkwardness of the poor Maestrino in his new habilities. He had such a gawky look that every body burst into a laugh at his appearance. His reputation, however, as his genius had room to manifest itself, grew daily, and he soon obtained so completely the good-will of his master, that the extraordinary favour of wearing his own hair and his simple clothes was granted to his entreaties. The surname of the Blackymoor, however, which the prince had bestowed upon him, stuck to him for years after."

The only part of Eszterház at present occupied is the stables,

which had just received an importation of twelve beautiful thorough-bred horses from England, with some very promising young stock. An old English groom had been sent out with them, and bitterly did he complain of the difficulties he had to encounter before he could convince the *beampters*—a race of hungry stewards by whom the estates of the nobles are mismanaged and the revenues plundered—of the many little wants and luxuries requisite for English race-horses.

The estates of Prince Eszterházy are said to equal the kingdom of Würtemberg in size; it is certain they contain one hundred and thirty villages, forty towns, and thirty-four castles! The annual revenue from such vast possessions is said, however, not to amount to 150,000*l*. per annum, though it is capable of considerable increase. The incumbrances at the present time are greater than with most other Hungarian magnates, few of whom are indebted to a less amount than half their incomes.

I remember some years since an anecdote going the round of the papers to the effect, that Prince Eszterházy had astonished one of our great agriculturists who had shown him his flock of two thousand sheep, and asked with some little pride if he could show as many, by telling him that he had more shepherds than the other sheep! By a reckoning made upon the spot, with one well acquainted with his affairs, we found the saying literally true. The winter flock of Merinos is maintained at 250,000, to every hundred of which one shepherd is allowed, thus making the number of shepherds 2,500! But, as a *spirituelle* of the neighbourhood observed when we were discussing these matters, "Les Eszterházys font tout en grand: le feu prince a doté deux cents maîtresses, et pensionné cent enfans illégitimes!"

It is not right to leave Eszterház without mention of Hánystock, or the wild man of the Hanság. The Hanság is a bog about twenty miles long, on the borders of which Eszterház is built. About eighty years since, in some part of this bog, an extraordinary creature is said to have been found, possessing something of the human form, but with scarcely any other quality which could entitle it to a place among our species. It was three feet high, apparently of about the middle age, strongly built, and said to have webbed feet and hands. It was unable to utter any articulate sounds, lived entirely on fish and frogs, showed no signs of any passion or feeling, except fear and anger, and was in every respect in the lowest state of brutality. The most curious part of its history is, that no one ever heard of it till acci-

dentally found by a peasant in the bog, when it was brought to Eszterház; where, after remaining fourteen months, it escaped, and was never heard of again. I believe there is some reason to suspect an imposition; for an Italian adventurer appeared and disappeared about the same time with Hánystock, and, though unable to cite name or place, I feel pretty certain that a similar occurrence took place in another part of Europe soon after.

A few miles from Eisenstadt and just on the confines of Austria, is a yet more interesting monument, of what we should call feudal greatness, belonging to the Eszterházy family. The castle of Forchtenstein, built by a Count Eszterházy, is still in a perfect state of preservation. It is placed on a bold rock, and commands a view of the whole country to the north-east and south. It is now used as a prison for Prince Eszterházy's peasantry,—for he is one of the few who retain the right of life and death, the "*jus gladii,*" on his own estates,—and is consequently guarded by a small detachment of very venerable-looking grenadiers.

The castle is sufficiently modern to have been laid out for the employment of artillery,—as may be seen by the heavy bastions and long curtains; and is still sufficiently old to bear marks of the Gothic architect about it,—of which the high watch-tower is not the least elegant. The interior has all the inconvenient straightness of a walled-in castle, and the apartments are for the most part small and simple. The most interesting object after the well, which is one hundred and seventy yards deep, and said to have been worked in the solid rock by Turkish prisoners, is the collection of arms. Besides arms sufficient for a regiment of foot and another of horse, which ere this an Eszterházy has equipped and maintained at his own cost, there is the gala equipment of a troop of cavalry which attended one of the princesses on her wedding-day, thirty pieces of artillery, suits of plain black armour for several hundred men, many curious specimens of early German matchlocks, and a quantity of Turkish arms of almost every description.

One suit of armour is interesting from the tale of rude courtesy attached to it. It formerly belonged to a Count Eszterházy who fell in a battle against the old enemies of Hungary, the Turks. A ball from the Pasha's own pistol had already pierced the Count's cuirass, but, anxious to make more certain of his death, the Moslem leaped from his horse and beat the helmet of the Christian till he broke open his visor, when he discovered in

the fallen foe an old friend by whom he had been most kindly treated when a prisoner in Hungary. Faithful to his friendship, the Turk made the only reparation in his power, for, after treating the body of Eszterházy with every possible mark of respect, he collected the armour in which he had died, and sent it, with the arms, which had caused his death, as a present to his family.

A great number of banners as well those taken from the enemy, as those under which the followers of Eszterházy fought, are hung round the walls. It is characteristic of the times that most of the Hungarian flags bear a painting of the Cross, with a figure of Christ as large as life.

In one room we noticed the genealogical tree of all the Eszterházys, in which it is made out, as clearly as possible, that beginning with Adam, who reclines in a very graceful attitude at the bottom of the tree, they pass through every great name, Jewish as well as Heathen, from Moses to Attila, till they find themselves what they now are, magnates of Hungary. What is still more extraordinary, there is a long series of portraits of these worthies, from Attila inclusive, with their wives and families dressed in the most approved fashion, and continued down to the present century.

It is a pity the noble owner of Forchtenstein does not imbibe a little of that Gothic mania so often ill-directed in England, and restore this castle to its former state. As a national monument of the taste of the middle ages in Hungary its restoration would be very desirable, and it would possess peculiar attractions, not merely from being the only castle of the kind here, but as a specimen of that mixture of the Asiatic and Gothic, which, in those days, so strongly characterized the habits and customs of the Magyars, and the remains of which even yet distinguish them from the rest of Europe.

The only purpose for which it is at present used, except as a prison, is to contain the treasures of the Prince. Of these I can only speak from report; for previously to my visit, I did not know that in order to see them it is necessary to have two persons present who live at a distance, each of whom has a key, without which the other is of no use, and therefore had not provided against the difficulty.

The splendour of the Eszterházy jewels is no secret in England; and it is in this good castle those heaps of treasure, which so tempted her Majesty's fair lieges at her coronation, are commonly preserved. It is said that each Prince is obliged to add

something to these jewels, and that they can never be sold except to ransom their possessors from captivity among the Turks. When the French entered Hungary, a small party presented themselves before Forchtenstein and demanded its surrender. The grenadiers, however, shut the gates, cut the bridge, and set them at defiance; and, as the enemy had no means of enforcing obedience, Prince Eszterházy saved his jewels. Besides the jewels, there is an extensive collection of ancient Hungarian costumes: among others, if I recollect rightly, one worn by King Mathias Corvinus.

How far the privileges of the Eszterházys, as hereditary Lords Lieutenant, may be constitutional, or how far the right of primogeniture—the *majorat*—has been wisely extended to a subject of such vast wealth, we leave for others to consider; but it is impossible to be witness of it, and not to regret that duties, however important, should detain one possessed of so much power away from his country. No country has a greater claim to the exclusive right of her children's services than Hungary at the present moment. Just struggling into notice among the states of modern Europe, exerting all her energies to preserve her liberties and nationality, and at the same time labouring to cast off the chains in which the institutions and laws of a more barbarous age have long bound her, she has full need of the moderating influence which a liberal aristocracy might exercise on her councils, and a just demand on all the support which the wealthy and powerful can afford her. At present, too, a strong suspicion pervades the country, that the highest of her nobles are the most indifferent to her welfare; a suspicion which, whether just or unjust, ought to be removed at any sacrifice, for one more dangerous to the security of a country can scarcely take possession of a people's mind.

In the course of our journey back to Presburg, we passed the little town of Œdenburg, where a huge watch-tower, the only remains of its fortifications, is still kept in repair. Owing to the wooden tiles with which the houses are commonly roofed in Hungary, the danger of fire is very great; and, in almost every town, a watchman is consequently employed to give the alarm, and as a sign of his vigilance he is obliged to blow a shrill whistle every quarter of an hour, day and night.

CHAPTER III.

VALLEY OF THE WAAG.

Valley of the Waag.—Hungarian Travelling Wagons.—Freystadtl.—Country Houses.—Erdödy Horses.—Vorspann; its origin—advantages and disadvantages.—Haiduk.—The River Waag.—Pillory.—Pistjan.—Numbering the Houses and Kaiser Joseph.—Csejta.—Murders of Elizabeth Báthori.—Betzko: its origin.—The Fate of Stibor.—Trentsin.—Stephan; his virtues and vices.—St. Stephen's day.—Peasant Costumes.

Before we enter upon any of those interesting but weighty questions which Presburg and the Diet naturally suggest, I invite the reader to accompany me in another country excursion, in order that we may become better acquainted with the face and form of this noble land, and thereby prepare ourselves to take a more lively interest in its politics and institutions. We were strongly recommended to visit the Valley of the Waag, as being one of the most picturesque and romantic parts of Hungary. And, if the reader has half the passion I have for following up the course of a river,—now sunning himself on its banks, now reposing in the shade of its hanging woods,—if he can lend a credulous ear to the legends of its old castles, and please himself with the quaint and simple customs of its secluded denizens,—then let him accept the invitation, for he will find much that is to his taste in the Valley of the Waag.

For some miles before it falls into the Danube at Komorn, the Waag winds slowly over a rich plain, presenting no object more interesting than a continued corn-field, extending almost as far as the eye can reach. Omitting, therefore, this part of its course, we shall transport ourselves direct from Presburg to Freystadtl, where the beauties of the valley and our tour commence.

We may remark, however, in passing, the kind of travelling equipage common to the middle and lower classes in Hungary, of which we met a great number on our road. It is a low four-wheeled wagon, exceedingly light, sometimes furnished with a

seat hung on leathern springs, at others stuffed only with a heap of straw, on which the master sits with an air of considerable dignity, and always smoking. The hinder part of the wagon is commonly filled with hay for provender on our journey. The number of these wagons with two, or four horses, which one meets in a day's drive is really astonishing. Every peasant seems to possess one.

Freystadtl presented an imposing appearance as we approached it. After passing a stately wooden bridge over the Waag, we entered a long avenue of poplars, with pleasure-grounds, laid out in the old-fashioned park style, on either side; while above us stood the Château of the Erdödys, with its woods and gardens extending a considerable distance in every direction. Though itself a square barrack-looking building, roofed with bright red tiles, and far from ornamental, Freystadtl possesses an advantage exceedingly rare in Hungarian country houses—its situation is most beautiful. Placed on an open platform, crowning a hill high above the Waag, and backed by still higher mountains, sheltered from the cold, yet commanding a view up and down the valley of rare beauty, it has all the advantages one could desire. I notice this circumstance the more from its excessive rarity in Hungary. It is wonderful, in some instances, with what perversity a poor low site has been chosen, from which nothing can be seen, and where neither health, comfort, beauty, nor any other cause can be assigned for the selection, while perhaps, only a few hundred yards off, nature has formed the most lovely position imaginable,—the very spot which an architect of taste would search a whole country for.

And then the sort of country houses they commonly build! long, one-storied, high-roofed places, only one room deep,—as uncomfortable and inconvenient as possible. As for the luxuries of halls and passages, they are rarely to be met with; a long suite of apartments communicating by folding doors, with a very large entrance room,—which serves as dining-room and ball-room when required,—form the general plan of the building. On one side is, perhaps, a drawing-room; beyond that, the lady's room, dressing-room, children's room, &c. On the opposite side to the drawing-room are the gentleman's apartments; among which is always a smoking room: and, beyond these, the strangers' rooms, of which there are often a great number. As there are no passages, one is either obliged to pass through other rooms, in going from one part of the house to another, or to cross the court ex-

posed to all the inclemencies of weather. The kitchen is almost always separate from the house, to avoid the smell of cooking; a great refinement, though inimical to hot dishes. What becomes of the servants I never could make out satisfactorily; the grooms, I know, always sleep in the stable, for an Hungarian does not believe that his horses would live through the night if the groom were not there to take care of them. Fire-places are rare, except, perhaps, in the billiard or smoking room; the whole house being heated by stoves, or, in new houses, by warm air. The high rooms and folding doors of the Hungarians certainly give a handsome air to an interior, and, in large houses, are indispensable to beauty; but, for comfort, I do prefer our little snug parlours, well closed and well carpeted.

I do not know why I should have been led to speak of Hungarian houses just now, because these general remarks are by no means applicable to Freystadtl, which is a well-arranged house, two stories high, and furnished with passages in abundance,—in fact, a very comfortable residence for a very grand seigneur.

The wonders of the house are, the fine library, the collection of engravings, and the chapel, with its miracle-working altar-piece. This altar-piece is a fine specimen of the wood-carving of the old German school, and contains a considerable number of figures painted in imitation of nature; among others, is one of the Virgin as large as life, ornamented with pearls and brilliants in profusion. The altar-piece was a present to a Count Erdödy from Mathias Corvinus, and is in great repute among the superstitious Sclavacks. The whole chapel is hung round with silver offerings in the forms of legs, arms, and eyes, in gratitude for cures performed on similar parts of the bodies of those who have solicited Our Lady of Freystadtl's good offices.

To me, however, the stables were more interesting than books, pictures, saints, and all: thirty black horses, of the size and form which we may imagine our knights of old to have mounted, were something to wonder at. This breed has been maintained—one may almost say created—by several generations of Erdödys. It is of Neapolitan origin, and still possesses the faults of that race,—the hollow back, low croup, and large head; but instead of the pony size, common in Naples, these horses range from eighteen to twenty hands in height. We drove out with a pair of them, one of which was eighteen and a half, and the other nineteen hands high, in a low and very heavy carriage; but they trotted with it over the roughest places, through the

deepest mud, up hill and down, as though it were merely sport to them. For use, these horses are of little value; but they are in demand for royalty, and are employed as procession steeds.

The present Countess Erdödy, a widow, is obliged to keep up the stud by the will of her husband. We spent a day very agreeably in seeing the establishment of Freystadtl. The theatre, riding-school, gardens, orangeries, dairies, &c., enabled us to form a pretty good conjecture how some of the rich Hungarian magnates of the old school get rid of their vast fortunes.

I must not omit to notice a sign of the times which the little town of Freystadtl presents. The inhabitants are all Sclavacks, but the names of the one or two streets it boasts of are conspicuously painted up in Hungarian, by order of the Diet, as we were told in hopes of thus Magyarising the Sclavacks.

We had ordered the horses to be ready for starting early the next morning, but we were doomed to wait much longer than we had expected. This waiting for horses is so important a feature in Hungarian travelling, and will occur so frequently in the course of these volumes, that I may as well at once explain the causes thereof.

We were now travelling with what is called Vorspann. It has long been one of the Hungarian peasant's duties to furnish horses to the government officers, civil as well as military, when travelling on duty through Hungary, at a certain rate fixed by law. A stage of about ten English miles, with four horses, is paid for at the rate of five kreutzers, *c. m.** (two pence English) a horse, which amounts to just eight pence for four horses the ten miles. An order, or "*assignation*," signed by the Vice Ispan, or some other authorized officer, gives the right to demand relays of these peasants' horses at certain indicated places, and, on showing it, it becomes the duty of the village officers to see that the demand is attended to.

So convenient an arrangement, in a country where in many parts no regular post is established, was very often extended to others besides those for whom it was originally intended. In fact, almost all the travelling in Hungary was effected with peasants' horses, and it soon became one of the greatest grievances of the peasantry. To check this abuse, the counties increased

* Sixty kreutzers, *c. m.* (*Conventions Munze*) make one florin, *c. m.* or silver florin, which is worth two shillings English. The florin, *w. w.* (*Wiener Wahrung*) or paper, or *schein* florin, is worth only about ten pence English, and the kreutzer *schein* bears the same proportion.

the charge to non-official persons, from eight pence to two shillings per post; and, in seasons when corn is dear, it is raised even beyond that amount. The payment, however, is still small; and it is therefore commonly made up by a handsome *trinkgeld*, often as much as the original sum itself. A shilling a horse for ten miles is still not dear. Except in harvest time, the Vorspann has ceased to be an oppression; and in winter, when the peasant has little for his team to do, it is eagerly sought after, and a good supply of horses is consequently at the traveller's command. In summer, on the contrary, it generally happens that an hour or two at least elapses between the changes; and very often the horses are brought up from work a distance of five or six miles, when they must be fed and rested before they can be used.

Although four horses may sound rather grand to the English reader, I must warn him against the idea that there is any superfluity in it; for, with a light carriage even, it is quite as much as they can do to get over five miles within the hour on good roads. Whether from early starvation or from peculiarity of race, the horses of the Hungarian peasants are among the smallest, and lightest, of any in Europe. They seem to have little life, poor things! or little courage to show it, for a kick or a prance is an excess unheard of. H—— says he has seen them lean against each other, to keep upon their legs. The harness is on a par with the horses: except a strap across the breast, it is entirely composed of thin cord, which generally breaks and requires tying three or four times between every station. Collars are unknown, and the reins are reduced to a single piece of string tied round the necks of the leaders. The whip, however, has a power of virtue in it! In length, strength, and sharpness, it is, beyond comparison, the prince of whips; and, to listen to its awful crack or the hollow thwack with which it falls on the drum-like sides of the horses, one can understand how it raises a gallop out of the veriest Rozinantes that ever crept.

If tiresome to the impatient, however, Vorspann is not without its conveniences, especially to lazy, sketching, geologizing travellers like ourselves. If the peasant makes us wait for him, he never objects to waiting for us in return. He will remain quietly for a whole morning, if we oversleep ourselves, without more grumbling than a feed of corn, and a glass of slivovitz—Hungarian whiskey—will satisfy; and should we wish to sketch a ruin or hammer a rock, his horses doze away for an hour or so without the slightest objection.

To those afflicted with delicate noses, the proximity into which that organ is brought with the not overclean peasant, as he is seated on the box, is not very agreeable. In addition to other filth, his long flowing hair is generally covered with hog's laid, which, although it produces the most beautiful heads of hair I ever saw, yields such odours under the influence of a hot sun as are even yet painful to think of.

It not unfrequently happens that the Vorspann money is taken by the Haiduk before starting; for the peasant is generally behindhand in his taxes, and, except in this way, it is difficult to get hard cash from him.

It would not be right to conclude a notice of the Vorspann without mentioning the Haiduk; at least in my mind they are so closely associated that I cannot conscientiously separate them. The Haiduk is a town officer, answering pretty much to our constable, but instead of a simple civil dress he wears a very smart hussar uniform, and when in full dress has a sabre by his side and a long feather in his schako. But his usual ensign of office is a stout hazel stick, of which most of the peasants under his influence know the weight and force. Like other petty officials, these Haiduks have all the humble subservience to superiors, all the insolence and cruelty to inferiors, which characterize the race every where else.

We had been fortunate enough to obtain an *assignation* for the whole of Hungary, and thought that all further trouble about horses was off our shoulders. At Freystadtl, however, we were undeceived. The servant presented the *assignation* to the Haiduk, who called his assistant, and after some colloquy, informed us that he would send off immediately, and he doubted not, that, in two or three hours, horses would be forthcoming.

At last the horses came, and we started on our journey up the valley. The fortress of Leopoldstadt, which is intended to command something or other, which those who pretend to know say it does not command, was passed without stopping, and, continuing our route through a forest of wild pear-trees, we followed h e Waag on to Pistjan.

This Waag is a strange inconsistent wandering stream,—as its name *Vagus* implies, fantastically changing its bed at every instant, and resisting man's best efforts to restrain its lawless course. Rarely a year passes that some village does not see a large portion of its finest land washed away, and a bed of sand and stones left in its stead; and occasionally, as in 1813, the

whole valley is overflowed, numbers of the people carried away and lost, the crops destroyed, and the smiling valley left a mere desert. It is only with the greatest hazard that any thing can be built or cultivated on its banks. It is said to be more subject to sudden floods of late years than formerly, and the superstitious peasant finds abundant reasons for it peculiar to himself: others attribute it to the cutting down the woods, and the increased cultivation in the higher valleys, which causes the water to run off more suddenly than formerly, and thus to inundate the country below. A commission of engineers have examined and reported on the means of preventing future dangers, but no effectual method has yet been considered.

The depth of water is in many places not more than one foot and a half, so that this river is of little use for navigation, although valuable for the transport of the wood, of which we shall say more hereafter. Taking its rise in the valleys of the Krivain, it becomes first navigable for small floats at Hradek, from which place to Komorn, where it falls into the Danube, is a distance of about one hundred and eighty English miles.

It was in the centre of some village, the name of which I have now forgotten, but which we passed during this morning's drive, that we spied a picturesque pillar, which H—— at once transferred to his sketch-book. It is a common ornament to the chief streets of the villages, in this part of Hungary. The handcuffs, heavy leg-chains, and ring for the neck, to which is suspended a massive iron ball, may all probably have been employed for the punishment of offenders in former days, but their rusty state is a sufficient proof that they are now exhibited rather *in terrorem* than applied in actual use.

Pistjan is a collection of small houses, with a large hotel, a large coffee-house, and large baths—excrescences, as it were, rather than the natural growth of the simple valley of the Waag. The waters are derived from springs which rise near the river, and are so hot as to require cooling before they can be used. Some of the springs are situated in the bed of the river itself, and are sufficiently warm to prevent its freezing at this place. The water contains a variety of salts,* and is in very high re-

* The temperature of the water is from 44° to 49° of Reaumur. In 26·50 grains of the salt deposited on cooling, are found 10·00 of sulphate of soda, 3·00 sulphate of magnesia, 7·00 sulphate of lime, 1·54 muriate of soda, 2·20 carbonate of lime, 2·00 carbonate of magnesia, 0·50 silex. It is particularly recommended in cases of gout, chronic-ulcer, and certain other chronic affections.

pute. Here, as well as in many other bathing places, we are told that bathing in society is the established mode. The peasants follow the example of their betters, but in a ruder fashion, for they dispense with all covering on these occasions. The poor despised Jews are not allowed to bathe with the other inhabitants; but they are more decent in their arrangements, and separate the sexes.

Every little cottage in Pistjan is distinguished by a sign over the door. Some of them are droll enough, but not more so than the reason our Cicerone assigned for their presence, "That is because Hungary is a free country," said he, "and won't allow the Emperor to number the houses; so the visiters, instead of saying, 'I live at No. 10, or No. 20,' say 'I live at the Blue Hussar, or the Golden Duck.' Oh! that would have been a terrible thing if Kaiser Joseph had numbered the houses as in Austria." It was not till some time after, that I received an explanation of this constitutional privilege. Joseph, it appeared, as the groundwork of his reforms, required the destruction of the municipal constitution of the Hungarian counties, and their reorganization on an entirely new principle; for while they remained self-governed, he found it impossible to carry out his police and taxation systems. The numbering of the houses* was one step towards this end; and the people, with a people's instinct, seized on the outward sign of subjection presented to their eyes, and resisted it without being aware of its own innocence or the dangers it concealed.

About two hours from Pistjan (that is, by the road our peasant coachman took us, across the ploughed fields) lies the castle of Csejta, a place so celebrated in the history of the horrible, that we willingly deviated a few miles from our tract to visit it. I know not why, but one always feels less incredulous of the marvellous when one has visited the scene of action and made oneself at home in the whereabouts of dark deeds—as though stone walls had not only the ears so often attributed to them, but tongues also to testify to the things they had witnessed. The history of Csejta, however, requires no such aid to prove its credibility; legal documents exist to attest its truth.†

* I have seen it hinted somewhere, that the more ignorant were made to believe that the red streaks on the houses were to mark those families who should be sent to some foreign country, while foreigners were to be brought to Hungary in their stead.

† For fear I should be suspected for a moment of appropriating what

The ruins of a once strong castle still remain on the summit of a hill which can be ascended only on one side; for, like many old Hungarian castles, Csejta is built on a limestone rock, forming an abrupt precipice on three sides. About the year 1610, this castle was the residence of Elizabeth Báthori, sister to the King of Poland, and wife of a rich and powerful magnate. Like most ladies of her day, she was surrounded by a troop of young persons, generally the daughters of poor but noble parents, who lived in honourable servitude, in return for which their education was cared for, and their dowry secured. Elizabeth was of a severe and cruel disposition, and her handmaidens led no joyous life. Slight faults are said to have been punished by most merciless tortures. One day, as the lady of Csejta was adorning at her mirror those charms which that faithful monitor told her were fast waning, she gave way to her ungovernable temper, excited, perhaps, by the mirror's unwelcome hint, and struck her unoffending maid with such force in the face as to draw blood. As she washed from her hand the stain, she fancied that the part which the blood had touched grew whiter, softer, and as it were, more young. Imbued with the dreams of the age, she believed *accident* had revealed to her what so many philosophers had wasted years to discover,—that in a maiden's blood she possessed the *elixir vitæ*, the source of never-failing youth and beauty! Remorseless by nature, and now urged on by that worst of woman's weaknesses, vanity, no sooner did the thought flash across her brain than her resolution was taken; the life of her luckless handmaiden seemed as naught compared with the rich boon her murder promised to secure.

Elizabeth, however, was wary as she was cruel. At the foot of the rock on which Csejta stands, was a small cottage inhabited by two old women, and between the cellar of this cottage and the castle was a subterranean passage, known only to one or two persons, and never used but in times of danger. With the aid of these crones and her steward, the poor girl was led through the secret passage to the cottage, where the horrid deed was accomplished, and the body of the murderess washed in virgin's blood! Not satisfied with the first essay, at different intervals, by the aid of these accomplices and the secret passage, no less than three hundred maidens were sacrificed at the shrine

does not belong to me, I must again acknowledge how much I am indebted to Mednyánsky for the history, authentic as well as legendary, of the valley of the Waag.

of vanity and superstition. Several years had been occupied in this pitiless slaughter, and no suspicion of the truth was excited, though the greatest amazement pervaded the country at the disappearance of so many persons.

At last, however, Elizabeth called into play against her, two passions stronger even than vanity or cunning—love and revenge became interested in the discovery of the mystery. Among the victims of Csejta was a beautiful maiden who was beloved by and betrothed to a young man of the neighbourhood. In despair at the loss of his mistress, he followed her traces with such perseverance, that, in spite of the hitherto successful caution of the murderess, he penetrated the bloody secrets of the castle, and, burning for revenge, flew to Presburg, boldly accused Elizabeth Báthori of murder before the Palatine, in open court, and demanded judgment against her.

So grave an accusation, so openly preferred against an individual of such high rank, demanded the most serious attention, and George Thurzo, the then Palatine, undertook to investigate the affair, in person. Proceeding immediately to Csejta, before the murderess or her accomplices had any idea of the accusation, he discovered the still warm body of a young girl whom they had been destroying as the Palatine approached, and had not had time to dispose of before he apprehended them. The rank of Elizabeth mitigated her punishment to imprisonment for life, but her assistants were burned at the stake.

With this tale fresh in our minds we ascended the long hill, gained the castle, and wandered over its deserted ruins. The shades of evening were just spreading over the valley, the bare gray walls stood up against the red sky, the solemn stillness of evening reigned over the scene, and as two ravens which had made their nest on the castle's highest towers came towards it, winging their heavy flight, and wheeling once round, each cawing a hoarse welcome to the other, alighted on their favourite turret, I could have fancied them the spirits of the two crones condemned to haunt the scene of their former crimes, while their infernal mistress was cursed by some more wretched doom.

The castle, though once strong, particularly towards the village, is now fast falling to decay. It is loosely built of unhewn stone, held together by mortar, and crumbles away with every shower and blast.

As we returned to the village we visited the cellar in which

the horrid butcheries took place, now bearing no marks but of the simple peasant's toil.

It was deep night before we reached our quarters at Neustadtl, a small and poor town on the Waag.

The next day we had a beautiful drive along the valley in which we now continued. About half way between Neustadtl and Trentsin, we passed the village and castle of Betzko. Situated on the summit of a rock which rises perpendicularly from the valley, Betzko presents a mass of picturesque ruins which have few equals. Placed so near the frontiers of Poland and Bohemia, it was a point of great importance in the wars, which almost constantly raged either between the government or the individual nobles of the neighbouring countries.

Like almost every castle in this valley,—for the Waag is the favourite region of legendary lore,—Betzko has its tale of mystery and wonder. It is said to owe its name and origin to a fool. Stibor, a Polish knight of great bravery, who had done good service in the cause of Hungary, received from King Sigismund large gifts of lands and castles, among which was included a great part of the valley of the Waag. In one of those intervals of peace which left the knight of the middle ages without his wonted occupation and excitement, Stibor was one day trying to while away the tedium of his hours in the company of his household, when Betzko, his favourite jester, succeeded so happily in his sallies of wit, that his delighted master offered him a wish. "Build a castle on that great rock before us, and give it to me." "Truly a fool's wish, to ask an impossibility," said those who stood round, in mockery of the jester's ambition.

"Who says it is impossible?" cried the knight: "what Stibor wills, Stibor does; ere the year be told a castle shall be there, and Betzko shall be its name."

From every side workmen now crowded up the steep ascent, and one after another the rugged crags bore walls and towers. Still more aid was needed, and according to the rude law that might is right, all travellers who passed the valley were stopped by Stibor's order, and their horses and servants made to afford a week's labour to the building. The year elapsed and Stibor kept his word, for the bare rock was crowned with as proud a castle as any in the land. It has ever since borne the name of the jester, who in lieu of the castle received a good estate from his wealthy master.

From the steep precipice which overlooks the valley, the same

Stibor is said to have met his death. Enraged that a favourite hound had been injured by an old servant, he ordered the gray-headed man to be thrown from the rock, where he was dashed to pieces as he muttered a curse on the cruel tyrant. Not long after, when Stibor had been feasting a great company of knights, and had retired to the beautiful gardens he had constructed with so much cost on the top of the rock, to sleep off the effects of intoxication on the cool grass, an adder bit him in the eye. Blinded and mad with pain, the wretched Stibor flew along the ramparts, heedless, ignorant of the danger he incurred, till at the very spot where his servant had been thrown down, he fell over, and striking on the rock yet red with his victim's blood, met the death his cruelty had so well merited.

Beyond this the valley became wider and less interesting till we approached Trentsin, where the mountains assume a bolder character, and that glorious castle is seen towering above the little town. As we passed the bridge and gained the outer walls—for Trentsin was once fortified,—we observed a mark on the corner-stone recording the extraordinary height to which the Waag had once risen, at least twenty feet above its ordinary elevation.

The entrance to Trentsin promises little, but its narrow double gates with "barbican and tower" once passed, and a wide long street opened before us composed of good houses with colonnades and parapets, which reminded me of Italy.

As Stephan was carefully preparing our beds while we were at supper, an extra glass of wine, which the old fellow had tasted in order, as he said, to see if it was fit for his master's palate, so far worked upon him as to loosen his tongue, and he broke out into some comparisons between the comforts we were enjoying, and the hardships he had endured in the long campaigns against the French, in which he had served as a hussar, and for which, as he said with a low grumble, "the Emperor has paid me with a bit of ribbon and an iron-cross!" "A bad world for us poor peasants," he continued: "in war we do the fighting and others get the honour and reward; in peace, we labour and others reap,—and after all, these counts and barons are not much better than we are. Most of their ancestors have got rich by robbery or treachery—Count —— betrayed and sold the friends he fought with; Baron —— did not get his large estates by his honesty,—and it is my belief that all the great people that go to Vienna now-a-days and look so proud, would sell their father-

land for a diamond cross, or a golden key to hang upon their coats." But let me introduce Stephan to the reader in person. A short and strongly built though meagre frame, supporting the very sharpest, hardest, and most weather-beaten face, is a description of his outward man. His character was fully as angular as his features; he could not bear the sight of a woman, at least if she had any pretensions to youth or comeliness, and I have rarely heard him say a civil word to any one but a child,—and their innocence softened even Stephan's heart. He was not naturally cruel; I remember his telling how in a night *sortie*, when they once took the French unawares, he poked a young lad of about sixteen with his sword, and told him to get away and hide himself: "I could not kill a man asleep who had done nothing against me." But ill-treatment or disappointment seemed to have soured him and rendered him suspicious of every one.

Such an obstinate fellow as old Stephan I never saw in any land: he would listen with the utmost patience to my directions, and then without caring for a word I had said, coolly follow his own devices; and if perchance I remonstrated, he would as coolly assure me that he was an old man, had travelled much, and knew what was best. For personal service few men could be more uncouth; S—— used to compare his assistance to that of the friendly bear who scratched his master's eye out, in knocking a fly from his nose. As a valet, Stephan knew his deficiency, and till he had learned that I did not require him to aid in putting on my clothes, and that I did require much water for lavation, he was obedient, but that once learnt, and the laws of the Medes and Persians were not more fixed than Stephan in his routine. In all other matters he thought himself decidedly a better judge than his master.

An Hungarian servant in travelling has a very difficult task to perform. It is his duty to watch the road, to direct the peasants where to drive, and at every moment to jump from the box and hold the carriage up on one side, or to hang on the steps on the other to prevent its overbalancing. In all this Stephan was excellent, and it was quite useless my objecting to take a particular road as too dangerous, or declaring that I would alight at any place for fear of an overthrow: "Only do you sit still—drive on coachman. I never had a carriage under my care overturned yet, and your grace (an Hungarian servant never addresses his master by a lower title) need not fear that I shall begin with yours."

One evening, before arriving at the village where we had determined to pass the night, we had lost the road in coming over the corn-fields, and found ourselves on the wrong side of the river and some miles from a bridge. Stephan got down to reconnoitre, and without informing me of the danger locked the wheels, hung on by the steps, and told the peasant to drive forward; but even he was frightened, when the carriage rushed down the steep and nearly perpendicular banks into the shallow bed of the river. For my part I could see nothing but the horses' tails, and I fully expected to roll over them; nor can I tell yet by what miracle we escaped.

I believe Stephan looked upon us as a packet of goods of which he had taken charge and was bound to deliver safe, but of whose will he thought as little as of that of any other packet. With Vorspann he was most useful, for he never had his ferret eyes off the driver, whom he alternately abused, encouraged, and directed, with the most persevering industry. None could surpass him in flogging horses, making beds, and foraging for a dinner. I remember he looked very reproachfully at me one day when I refused to let him shoot some geese that had strayed from a neighbouring farm-yard:—"It would not be the first time I have done it, and shared it with my commanding officer, and who knows if your grace may get any thing so good at the next place." At night he wrapped himself in his old cloak,—I never could persuade him to wear his new great coat except on very fine days,—and slept under the carriage on the ground, partly for its security, and partly, as he said, "because he felt it cooler and more comfortable out of doors than in those hot beds." Thanks to his early life, spent in the Banat, and his later travels, he could speak Magyar, Sclavackish, Ratzish, (a kind of Sclavish,) Wallachian, German, and a little Italian. Like many other old soldiers, Stephan was what in the Austrian army is called a "quartalsäufer," that is, a man who every now and then will get most immoderately drunk, remaining during the intervals very sober and steady. I received some hint of his devotion to the jolly god before I engaged him, but he protested so strongly against the insinuation, and desired me so cordially to throw him out of the window if ever such an event should happen, that I was fain to believe him. Alas! poor Stephan, I fear it was thy besetting sin.

Grinning a grim smile as he saw us rather struck by his reflections on the various fortunes of the rich and poor, and per-

ceiving that he had caught our attention, Stephan turned the conversation to a subject of more immediate interest, and told us that we must positively remain at Trentsin for the morrow; it was the fête of St. Stephen, the patron saint of Hungary, and the peasants would come in from all the country round; there would be a great procession to the church, and every one as gay as possible. Warning the old fellow to keep himself sober in the early part of the day,—I never like to interfere with any one's scruples of conscience, and as I once had an Irishman in my service I know how conscientiously a man may get drunk on his patron saint's day,—I agreed to stay and leave Stephan to have as glorious a night as he chose.

The next morning the firing of the guns and the ringing of the bells warned us that the festival had commenced, and roused us up just in time to see the long procession of priests and choristers chanting their hymns, preceded by those emblems of ecclesiastical pomp, the floating banner, the robed attendants, and the rich ornaments of gold and silver which the Church of Rome so well knows how to employ, entering the large church, followed by a train of town's people and peasants, of whom three-fourths at least were women. During the whole morning, groups of peasants, in an endless variety of costume, nearly filled the little town. We were surprised to hear that almost every village in this mountainous country has its peculiar costume, and should by chance a girl of one village marry and live in another, she still keeps the dress of her native place. The most striking costumes among the women, were those chiefly composed of white linen, with white worsted boots on the feet: I call these latter articles of dress, boots, rather than stockings; for having persuaded one of them to take them off, we found them soled with leather, and so thick that they stood upright like leather boots. Occasionally the white skirt is relieved by a red or blue bodice. They all wear a little white cap at the back of the head, but the unmarried girls are distinguished from the matrons by a small red roll which just peeps out below the white of their caps.

Stephan persuaded two very modest and good-tempered girls to come and stand to us for a sketch. They were evidently quite as much satisfied with the attention their appearance excited as the vainest of their sex in Paris or London.

The men have less variety in their costume. It usually consists of thick, white cloth pantaloons often embroidered with black worsted lace; short woollen boots of the same colour, and

ornamented in the same manner, slit at the sides and slouching; with a dark short coat or cloak with sleeves, but worn, at least in summer, like the Spanish cloak, and embroidered with red or light green lace.

As we are now fairly in the land of the Sclavacks, and are likely to continue among them some time longer, it may be as well to let the reader more fully into the light as to who and what these Sclavacks are before we proceed any further.

CHAPTER IV.

VALLEY OF THE WAAG.

The Sclavacks; their History, Character, Habits, and Appearance.—Monastery of Skalka.—Philosophy of Drunkenness.—Imaginary Dangers.—Castle of Trentsin.—The Legend of the Lovers' well.—Travelling Expenses in Hungary.—Trentsin Bath.—Hungarian Tinkers.—Castle Architecture.—Vagh-Besztercze.—Ennobled Jews.—Traveller's Troubles.—Lipsky's Map—Szulyon.—Hrisco.—Szolna.—Teplitz.—Sophia Bosnyák.—Catholic Priests; their Hospitality.

The Sclavacks* are a branch of that great Sclavish family, which seems, at one period, to have occupied nearly the whole east of Europe, from the Baltic and Adriatic to the banks of the Wolga. There can be little doubt that the greater part of Hungary was peopled by them, till the fierce Magyars drove them from the fertile plains to the barren mountains, which they still hold. The chief part of that mountainous district between the Danube, the Theiss, and the most northern range of the Carpathians, is peopled by Sclavacks, who still retain their original language (a dialect of the Sclavish, though different both from the Bohemian and Polish,) their national customs and characteristic appearance. Other portions of the same race occupy, in the south of Hungary, the countries now called Croatia and Sclavo-

* It is very desirable, that the reader should distinguish carefully between the names Sclave, Sclavack, and Sclavonian. The name Sclave is given to a whole family, of which the Sclavacks and Sclavonians are only two insignificant members. The first of these—the Sclavacks—occupy a portion of the west and north of Hungary, not distinguished by any particular name; the second, the Sclavonians,—occupy a district between the Danube and Save, formerly an independent country, and although now a part of Hungary, still retaining the name of Sclavonia. I trust the map will enable the reader to understand this subject more perfectly; it is one of particular interest, because Russia, by exerting the influence which similarity of language, and in some parts, similarity of religion, also, gives her over these populations, has hitherto frightened Austria into doing almost any thing she likes. One of the favourite dreams of Russian ambition is the re-union of the great Sclavish family into one nation under the crown of Russia.

nia, and extend south, nearly to the ruins of Athens itself. In Hungary, they seem to have experienced the same fate as the British in our own country, where the bleak mountains of Wales, the Highlands of Scotland, and the west-coast of Ireland have preserved the pure blood of Britain's earliest lords; while Saxon churls and Norman soldiers appropriated her fairest fields to their own use. Other Sclaves are found among the motley population of Hungary, but of a later origin; for instance, the Rusniacks, in the north-east of Hungary, are probably the descendants of a band of Russians who accompanied the Magyars in their first incursions; and the Serben, and others known under the name of Raatzen, are settlers of a much later date from Servia, Bosnia, and the neighbouring countries. The greater part of the Sclavacks profess the Catholic religion, though a part are Lutherans, perhaps the descendants of some thousand Bohemian Hussites, who fled from the persecutions which all of that sect experienced in their native country.

It is always difficult to describe the character of a people, perhaps presumptuous for a mere passer by, who does not even speak their language. That his opinions should be received with great caution is unquestionable, but no man can remain any time amongst strangers without remarking many circumstances in their manners and conduct from which he cannot help drawing some conclusions; as I pretend to do nothing more, I trust, that if in error, no one will be very seriously misled. In Hungary, however, the stranger has better opportunities of seeing and knowing the lower classes, or, I should rather say the peasantry, than in most other countries where the roguish postillion and lying sight-shower alternately rob and mystify the wonder-seeking tourist. Here a peasant is always the traveller's coachman, and is often his host, his guide, his huntsman, in short, his frequent companion.

The Sclavack is slow in every thing, and until roused by passion or intoxication, nothing can be more humble than his appearance, more slavish, I would almost say, than his manner. No matter how Stephan abused the driver or beat his horses; it was seldom he even remonstrated against such proceedings, but it very rarely happened that he did not repay himself for the abuse by demanding more than the fair charge for his trouble, supported by some false statement; and frequently, after receiving two or three times the usual present, he would still ask for something more. I notice this particularly, because I do not recollect that

I ever once met with such conduct among the Magyars. Wo to the servant who should beat their horses; but I never knew them demand more than was just, and many have with great delicacy avoided looking at the amount of the present till out of sight, or have merely testified their gratitude by a hint to the next peasant to drive his best.

The Sclavack is, after the German, probably the most industrious of the inhabitants of Hungary, and perhaps the only one of whom a manufacturer could be made; but his industry is far from rendering him rich: the soil he labours at is barren, and his small profits are all expended on spirits. Drunkenness is the Sclavack's bane, and leaves him among the worst lodged, worst fed, and worst clothed, of the Hungarian peasantry. Some philosophers would fain persuade us that were wine and brandy cheap, people would no longer get drunk; and a traveller in Norway attributes the sobriety of the people there to the abundance of spirits. I am sorry I cannot say as much for the Hungarians. Wine and spirits are cheap enough, but the peasant, no matter of what race, cannot be called sober by any one who respects the truth. Nor indeed, by those whose position necessarily imposes continued hard labour and forbids almost every luxury, is it probable that the agreeable stimulus of intoxicating liquors will be resisted; not at least till an improved education shall have given them a taste for higher enjoyments. Besides, there is another consideration connected with this subject which never seems to have entered into the heads of these pseudo philosophers,—the real solid pleasure of drinking,—if they would but try it occasionally themselves, I am sure they would grow wiser.

The Sclavack peasant's house is almost always built of the unhewn stems of the pine, covered with straw thatch, carelessly and ill-made; its interior is not overclean, and the pig, oxen, and goats are on far too familiar terms with the rest of the family. It is rare amongst the Sclavacks to see those neatly fenced farm-yards, large barns, and stables, and well-made corn-stacks, which are so often met with among the Magyars. How far this may depend on the poverty of the soil it is difficult to say; that it does not depend on any greater severity of the landlord in one case than in the other, as I have heard insinuated, my own observations convince me.

The Sclavacks are in general about the middle size, strongly formed, of a light complexion, with broad and coarse features

half shaded by their long flaxen hair. In some particular districts, however, there are found among them singularly fine and handsome men—as a military friend of mine observed, "ready made grenadiers." The peasant women, when young, are sometimes pretty, but hard labour and exposure to the sun soon deprive them of all pretension to comeliness.

Altogether I do not think I like the Sclavacks, but I really can scarcely say why; perhaps old Stephan infused a little of his gall into my heart. He hated them cordially,—more particularly, he said, because their King sold the country to the Magyars for a white horse. There is some tradition that Swatopluk, the last of their kings, engaged to deliver up the country to Arpád, and a white steed and his trappings were to form a part of the payment:

"For snow-white steed thou gav'st the land;
For golden bit, the grass;
For the rich saddle, Duna's stream;
Now bring the deed to pass."*

But it is time that we returned to Trentsin. We can leave the Sclavacks to show and speak for themselves as we become better acquainted with them in the course of our journey.

In spite of a burning sun, we walked along the banks of the river Waag to visit Skalko, a monastery at some little distance from Trentsin, said to have been the residence of a St. Benedict, one of the earliest preachers of Christianity in Hungary. We mistook the spot, it appears, and only reached the church, erected many years after by a Count Thurzo, on the rock, where the saint met his martyrdom. The monastery, as we found, next day, when we passed it on the opposite side of the river, was concealed from our view by a small wood, under which we lay to rest ourselves; we lost nothing, however, for it is a plain white-washed building, without any pretension to architectural beauty. The object of our walk was answered; we had a beautiful view of the valley, and were not a little amused with the groups of peasants which every pot-house afforded us. True Sclavacks, they were most of them by this time glorious; even some of the fair sex seem to have yielded to the soft temptation. The fiddle or the bagpipe was hard at work; and though I may have seen more elegant, I never saw more earnest dancing. The Scotchman must not flatter himself that bagpipes, any more than the

* Bowring, Poetry of the Magyars.

shepherd's plaid, are peculiar to the "land o'cakes;" the latter, we shall find common among the Wallacks, and the former is never absent from a Sclavack festival; and I can assure him that it is quite as grating in the mountains and valleys of Hungary, as among the rocks and rivers of bonny Scotland.

Now had I the brilliant imagination of some travellers, I have no doubt I might make out an interesting story of terror from this simple walk; might fancy that the knot of rough-looking men who spoke together, and whose eyes seemed to follow us, had intended some dreadful crimes; and this coquettish-looking girl had some treacherous meaning in her pretty salutation and side-long glance; or that the man who joined us and spoke German, had some sinister design in offering to show us the nearest way to the town. But I have no imagination, and with the best will can see danger neither in rough-looking peasants, smiling village girls, or civil citizens. The rough peasant has always the good manners to raise his hat to you as you pass him; the village girl offers you with a smile the Sclavack's greeting, "Praised be Jesus Christus;" and the citizen, in return for answering all your questions about his town and its neighbourhood, has no more sinister object than that of knowing who you are, where you come from, and what you are doing, a curiosity that I was always very willing to gratify; yet from such sources do travellers weave wonderful stories of the dangers of travelling in Hungary,—at least I never saw any better sources for them.

Towards sunset we ascended the castle hill, following the stairs cut in the rock which lead down almost to the town, and which are defended by towers and gates in every practicable part. It is not very long since the castle of Trentsin was in part habitable, but uncovered walls soon yield to wet and frost in a climate like this, and much has fallen and more is fast tottering to decay.

Fortified by the Romans, the Magyars found the castle of Terentius a strong fortress when they first arrived in the country; since then it has at times been a garrison of the crown, at times the seat of its worst enemy. Sometimes its possessors have proudly assumed an almost independent state, under the title of Counts of Trentsin, and lords of the Waag; and often has its importance, by exciting the ambitious hopes of its masters, led to their shame and destruction. Under John Zápolya it was besieged and burnt, but having been rebuilt by Alexis Thurzo,

it fell a second time into the hands of the Transylvanian leaders. Its most severe trial, and its last, was in 1707; when held by the troops of Rákótzy, it was besieged by the royalists, and its garrison reduced to such extremities that they ate up even the dogs, cats, and mice, rather than yield to their opponents. Since that time Trentsin Castle has been dismantled and left in the possession of the Counts Illyesházy, to whom a great part of the county of Trentsin belongs.

To me, the most interesting part of the old ruins was the lovers' well, sunk through the solid rock, four hundred and fifty-six feet,—and that too by the force of true love. But I must tell the tale as Mednyánsky has recorded it.

It was in the reign of Mathias Corvinus that Trentsin was in the possession of Stephen Zápolya, a powerful chief, who added much to the strength and magnificence of the noble pile. Like many other castles, however, placed on the summit of rocks, Trentsin paid dearly for the advantages of its situation, by having no supply of water but what was afforded by cisterns, evidently insufficient to enable a large garrison to support a long siege. To Zápolya this deficiency in his favourite castle was a source of deep disappointment, nor had any one been able to propose an effectual remedy for it.

"Musing one day on this mortification, as he saw his new works nearly completed, he was roused by the announcement of his attendants that a Turkish merchant had arrived, who wished to treat with him for the ransom of some prisoners whom he had captured in the last war, and brought home with him in slavery. As a soldier alive to the courtesies of war, Zápolya at once expressed his willingness to take ransom for all such as still remained in his hands: 'as for those I have given to my followers, they are no longer in my power, any more than the young girl whom my wife has chosen for her handmaid; for the former, you must treat with their present masters; for the latter, she is become such a favourite with her mistress, that I am sure no sum would ransom her.'—'But might I not see this maiden?' anxiously demanded the young Turk. The girl was sent for, 'Omar!' 'Fatime!' burst at the same moment from their lips as they rushed into each other's arms.

"Fatime, it appeared, was the daughter of a Pascha, and the affianced bride of Omar, who lost her in the night when Zápoyla had attacked the Turkish camp, and her lover, disguised as a merchant, had undertaken this journey in search of her.

"Enraged at the Turk's presumption, Zápolya ordered Fatime back to the Countess's apartments, and, deaf alike to the entreaties and high offers of the lover, positively refused to deprive his wife of an attendant she liked. In vain Omar supplicated, in vain he threw himself passionately at the feet of Zápolya and begged of him his mistress. At last, angered at his perseverance, the haughty lord swore he might more easily obtain water from the rock they stood on than compliance from him: 'Try,' said he in scorn, 'and when the rock yields water to your prayers, I give up Fatime, but not till then.' 'On your honour!' exclaimed Omar, springing to his feet, 'you give up Fatime, if I obtain water from this rock?' 'If you do,' said the knight, astonished that the Turk should have understood him literally, 'I pledge my knightly word to release your mistress and all my prisoners ransom free.'

"What is impossible to youth and love? Omar, aided by the captive Turks, set to work, and long and patiently did they labour at the unyielding stone. Three wearisome years were passed, and they saw themselves apparently as far from success as at the commencement, when, almost exhausted with fatigue and despair, the joyful cry of 'Water! water!' burst on their ears. The spring was found—Fatime was free!"

As we prepared to leave Trentsin next morning, a very impertinent waiter—it is a curious fact that whenever the landlord is a rogue, the waiter is impertinent—brought us a most exorbitant bill, at least the double of what we had paid any where else. Old Stephan swore all the Sclavacks were rogues, and not worth the white horse their king sold them for; but as we had no one to appeal to, and had a great horror of a dispute, we paid and started. I find what I then thought so infamous a charge,—and which indeed was so for that country,—amounted to just twenty-four shillings for two days! While on the subject of expenses I may as well remark that, including every thing, we did not lay out more than fifty pounds in the six weeks we occupied in this part of our tour. This includes the servants' wages and living for two persons, and posting constantly with four or six horses. The ordinary price of a dinner for two persons is about half-a-crown. A bottle of indifferent wine about six-pence: supper is the same as dinner. A breakfast of coffee and bread for two, twenty pence; two beds with clean linen—it is rather cheaper if the traveller is less particular—two shillings and four pence. Nor must it be supposed that any thing

was saved by staying in private houses. Stephan, who I rather suspect was anxious that we should leave a good reputation behind us, at least in the servants' hall, always insisted on the propriety of giving something to every servant, however little, and as the number of servants is usually very great, we generally gave quite as much as the inn would have cost us. Nor, on the whole, was Stephan wrong, for in travelling afterwards in company with Hungarian gentlemen, I found them paying nearly at the same rate. I am quite sure the old fellow never kept any of it for himself, though its distribution was left entirely to him: a more honest man I never saw.

From Trentsin our first point was Teplitz,* or the bath of Trentsin, as it is often called. It is situated about ten miles from Trentsin in a valley jutting off from that of the Waag, and ending in a *cul de sac*, at the bottom of which the baths are placed. Like every other bathing-place, Teplitz has the cold, bare, whitewashed look, proper to these places, with a promenade and shops full of useless articles, and old cripples and young cripples, and all the other amusing objects, for the love of which healthy people leave their comfortable homes to pass a month in bad lodgings.

Trentsin is a favourite resort of the Poles and Bohemians, as well as of the Hungarians of the north, and though said to be useful to the sick,† has little to attract the healthy.

Regaining the Waag, we continued our route along the valley amid fine crops of hemp, buckwheat, poppies, and potatoes. We passed, at Dubnitz, a large mansion of Count Illyesházy, built like a barrack and placed in the very worst position that could possibly have been chosen, for the valley is here more beautiful than ever, the line of the Carpathians bounding Moravia is within an hour of the river, and the landscape almost perfect; yet is this mansion placed in a flat, dirty village, without a prospect beyond it.

The roads throughout this valley are excellent, and the horses better than usual, so that we were enabled to keep up a trot without intermission. The English reader may laugh at this

* Teplitz is a Sclavish word signifying "warm bath," and is therefore like the German "Baden," scarcely a distinguishing name.

† The most active ingredient in the water is sulphur,—the temperature is 30° R. These waters are chiefly recommended in chronic rheumatism, gout, &c.

idea of good travelling, but to us it was luxurious compared with what we had been used to for the day or two previous.

From the northerly and most mountainous part of this county and from some of the neighbouring districts, are said to come those wandering tinkers,—or I believe I should rather call them pot-menders, for they do not come up to the dignity of tinkers,—who are seen pursuing their poor trade not only in their native country, but in every part of the Austrian dominions. Their chief talent lies in repairing broken earthenware, by binding it together with the wire which they always carry about with them. At certain seasons they return to their own settlements, where the women and children remain during their absence. Excepting the gipsies, these men are the very poorest and most miserable of all the motley population of Hungary. Their language would declare them to be Sclaves, like the rest of the inhabitants of this neighbourhood; but I must say I think there is something in the expression and in the form of their features which distinguishes them, and seems to indicate some difference of origin.*

Although very fine men, their tight dress hanging in rags about their spare forms, and their long, shaggy, dark hair escaping from under the broad hat over their wild features, render them, without exception, the most savage-looking beings I ever saw, and to the casual traveller who meets them among the scenes of more civilized life, and hears them spoken of as Hungarian peasants, they must convey a strange idea of the country they come from. It may be as well to inform these travellers at the outset, that such is not the state of the mass of the Hungarian peasantry.

At Bellus the road leaves the Waag, and crossing a cold highland district, joins it again at Vagh Besztercze, where we arrived towards evening. As we got out of the carriage a miserable beggar presented himself, and welcomed us in tolerable Latin, and in reply to some kreutzers returned a "Do gratias, Illustrissime!"

About half a mile beyond the village is another of those ruined castles which are so numerous on the Waag. It is placed on

* These are the same people of whom Mr. Gleig speaks under the name of *Torpindas*. Where this writer obtained this name I know not; I have never heard it used in Hungary, nor can I find it in any Hungarian author. Has he not mistaken it for *Topf-binder*, pot-mender? At Presburg they are called *Trentsiner*, *Drahtflechter* (wire-workers,) or sometimes *Drotari*

the summit of a sugar-loaf-shaped mountain, to which access seems almost impossible, and except by sudden surprise or hunger it was probably never reduced. As a ruin, excepting from its fine position, it has less to attract the artist than many of its fellows. In most of the castellated structures of Hungary, though fully equalling those of any other country in the strength and beauty of their position, in the vastness of their extent, and in their value as military posts of the age to which they belong, I observed few of those delicacies of architecture—coquetries of barbaric taste—with which the Norman and Teutonic knight loved to adorn his favourite stronghold, and which, like the stiff collars and stately dress of his "ladye faire," might serve to defend as well as to ornament the fortress they surrounded.

The Hungarian castle has a solid and somewhat heavy appearance; the walls are rarely parapeted; the elegant watch-tower, so common on the Rhine, is wanting; the richly mullioned bay-window, the fretted archway and escutcheon-sculptured turret are very scarce; and, instead of the flat roof of England, every tower is commonly surmounted by a wooden covering very like an extinguisher. I am not quite sure that the flat roof belongs to the castle of these times by right; in most of the old pictures of castles, especially the German ones, the roofs are certainly high, and it is probable that they did not disappear with us till knocked down by artillery. Formerly, I believe, the watch-tower, and sometimes, perhaps, the keep, had flat roofs.

Vagh Besztercze was once in the possession of two brothers Podmanin, who, because they chose rather to fight for themselves than for their king, were discourteously entitled robbers instead of valiant knights. Here too there is a tale of love and war; but much as I like these legends myself, I dare not trouble my readers with the tenth part of what I know, for it is scarcely probable that, without the excitement of the scenery and travelling, he should feel the same interest in them that I did when I heard them on the spot.

Below the castle, just at the foot of the mountain, and at the very edge of the water, stands a modern mansion, ugly as a whitewashed stable, liable to be broken in by the falling rocks from above, and to be washed away by the flood below. This house, together with a large property in the neighbourhood, has been lately bought by a converted Jew of immense wealth. The Austrian government does not, any more than our own, allow

the Jews to possess landed estates; but it so happens, that the greater part of the bankers of Vienna are of the Hebrew nation; and, as with wealth comes almost naturally the desire for landed property, the Jew is converted to Christianity,—or, at least, is Christened,—and purchases a large property; perhaps receives a title and becomes an Hungarian nobleman. The Hungarian nobles are extremely indignant that their caste should be thus degraded; and a degradation it is, that what they hold an honour should be conferred as the reward of hypocritical apostacy; but they forget that the blame should rest on the cause which produces it—the unjust laws which render religious opinions the ground of political disabilities.

As for the fear so often expressed in Hungary, that the government, by letting in so many foreign speculators, will destroy the Magyar nationality, and convert the country into a German province, or a new Judea, it is too ridiculous to require an answer. A very little knowledge of human nature is sufficient to teach us that the second, if not the first, generation of those whose origin is not considered too reputable, are certain to forget all about it. The Hungarians may rest assured that it will not be the fault of the newly-made nobleman,—be he of what origin or religion he may,—if he does not very soon persuade himself that his ancestors were of the purest Magyar blood, and if he himself does not become the warmest supporter of Magyarism in all its forms.

Before leaving the inn at Besztercze, to stroll along the banks of the river, we had ordered our supper, and desired them to have the floor well washed, as I felt certain from the dirt which covered it, that little quiet could be expected while it remained as we found it. When we returned, old Stephan had got the table spread and the room washed. Our supper consisted, as usual, of thin soup, roasted chickens, and salad, and on the present occasion, an omelette, flavoured with coarse preserve of the common plum. The wine, though rather sour, was strong, and with sugar and mineral water made no unpleasant summer beverage. And this, reader, is the fare you may almost always get in any part of this unknown, and, as you probably imagine, very savage land.

Before we had half done supper, I found my presentiment was just, though my precaution had been vain,—we were absolutely covered with fleas. In such cases, the only way to escape the tormentors is to go to bed. Yes, strange as it may appear, in a

room full of fleas, you may sleep quite free from them,—that is providing they do not fall down through the ceiling upon you, which will sometimes happen. In the common country inn in Hungary, the bed is a wooden box, about six feet long by two and a half wide, standing on legs two feet high. This box is filled with straw, and thereon is laid a hair mattress. In some places, such is the whole bed; in others, sheets, and all the other *et ceteras*, are provided; but as they are by no means always of that purity which one could wish,—a witty German says, that Hungarian sheets are of every imaginable shade of colour except white—almost every one travels with his own sheets, pillow, coverlet, and leathern sheet.

The first thing to render yourself secure is, to have the straw removed and replaced by a fresh supply. If the mattress is not one of the most promising, reject it also, and spread the leathern sheet over the straw, and the linen sheet over that. The great secret is to have the linen sheet much larger than the bed, and to leave them hanging over on all sides, so that it may be quite impossible for the fleas, even supposing them to remain about the bedstead, to get to you. Over the lower sheet you place as usual your upper sheet and silk wadded coverlet,—the lightest and the warmest covering I know. I once remembered in Moldavia,—a country infinitely barbarous and dirty,—to have slept undisturbed by these means, in a room where all the three insect plagues which have been given to torment humanity and teach it the utility of cleanliness, abounded in a degree I had no previous conception of.

As soon, therefore, as Stephan had completed these arrangements, we turned into our boxes, smoked our meerschaums, and talked over the events of the day in comfort, and with the sweet confidence of a quiet sleep after it. Only those who have wanted it can know how sweet that confidence is.

The next morning saw us again on our pilgrimage and brought us to a small village,—Prevink, I think,—whose modest burial-ground proclaimed the simplicity of its poor inhabitants. The cemetery, in Hungary, is almost always placed outside the precincts of the village, and is generally ornamented by a chapel and a variety of monuments, which indicate the former relative wealth and importance of its occupants; but here there was no church,—a wooden cross with a rudely painted figure of our Saviour served to sanctify the spot—while each grave was marked by a little cross of wood at its head without a sign or letter to distinguish

its unlettered tenant, and many of those crosses were falling to decay and already making place for others, as though willing to incumber the space no longer than was required to fit it for a fresh occupant.

A little beyond Prevink we had ordered the driver to turn off the high road at a given point for the sake of visiting a curious valley we had heard of in the neighbourhood, but he had missed it and gone too far. As I examined the map and made Stephan explain his error, he looked at me with wonder and almost awe. How I a stranger could tell better than he where the road turned off to Szulyon was more than he could conceive. It was one, among many instances I met with, of the extreme minuteness and accuracy of Baron Lipszky's map of Hungary. This map, which would cover the side of a small room, I had got bound up in nine parts of a convenient size, and always carried with me the portion immediately required. By this means I not only gained an intimate knowledge of the geography of Hungary, but was in many instances able to direct those who considered themselves well acquainted with the country. I know no other map equally perfect, except, perhaps, Keller's Switzerland, and when the different extent of the countries is considered as well as the difficulties with which Lipszky had to contend in a region so little known, it must be allowed to be a work of no ordinary merit.

The valley of Szulyon, which we had quitted our route to visit, and which we now entered by a narrow pass which left scarcely room for the road and rivulet, is remarkable for the curious formation of a range of sandstone rocks by which it is bounded on one side. Of a soft and crumbling nature, these rocks have been worn by the weather into a thousand whimsical shapes, which the fancy of the shepherd has endowed with resemblances to men, animals, buildings, and I know not what else of grotesque.

While H—— was sketching, I took my hammer and climbed up some part of the rocks. I found them composed of a very loose coarse sandstone, at times assuming almost the appearance of conglomerate; in some parts crumbling to the touch, in others resisting the efforts of the hammer. It is to this circumstance the peculiarity in their appearance is owing, the soft parts have been washed away, and the harder have remained. These often occur in the form of long pillars, with slender bases; often in isolated masses of indefinite forms; on the whole presenting an

exceedingly curious spectacle, though not quite so striking as some traveller finds it, who says, "that he turns round on leaving the valley to ask himself once more if strange magic has not converted into stone a living city, with all its architectural and living wonders."

In passing to the back of the hill I found the sandstone overlaid by limestone. It is said to belong to the Bohemian sandstone formation; to this I cannot speak.

As we regained the Waag, we observed for the first time a crop of mangel-wurtzel. It is used as with us for winter fodder. In addition to the common white crops—maize, wheat, oats, and rye—we noticed in this neighbourhood potatoes, lint and a few hops. It is much too cold for the vine in the greater part of the valley of Waag.

At Hrisco we were obliged to wait an hour and a half for horses, during which time we might have ascended to the old castle which crowns a very precipitous and craggy rock overlooking the village; but as we did not know at what moment the horses might arrive, and were afraid of being late at our destination, we did not venture. As usual, Hrisco has its legend. Dark deeds are said to have been perpetrated within its walls, after which the whole castle was filled at night with howlings, as of afflicted spirits, till at last a monk who reproved the murderer for his crime and was thrust out for his unwelcome words, turned himself into stone beside the door that he might be a constant warning to the hard-hearted Castellan, and even though now long deserted,—for no one has dared to live in Hrisco since that time,—the stony monk stands there still.

It was late when we reached Szolna, an old-fashioned little town, which we entered over a bridge placed across the former foss, and, passing under a low strong archway, and through a narrow street, arrived at last in a handsome square. This square, which is built round with good stone houses with furnished colonnades, forms just the centre of the town, which consists of one street answering to each side of the square and opening into it at the corners, the whole being enclosed within a strong wall. Almost all the houses in the back streets are built of wood black with age, and are ornamented with overhanging gables towards the street.

Szolna was at one time a place of considerable importance; indeed, the capital of Protestantism in the north of Hungary. A synod was held here in 1610, and soon after an academy was

founded, and a printing-press established, from which issued a number of controversial works, still esteemed by the *bibliomane* for their rarity.

We were put sadly out of temper to-night by the horribly sour wine they gave us to wash down a bad supper. In vain we begged, in vain we offered money for better, the landlady said that the wine was seignoral, and no better dare she sell. As the reader will learn more fully hereafter, the sale of wine and the sale of flesh are rights of the lord of the manor, and here we had a striking proof of the annoyance of this custom. In some cases the inn-keeper pays an annual rent for the exclusive privilege of selling wine in a certain town or village, and of course can then poison the poor traveller with as bad wine, and as dear, as he chooses; in other cases, as at Szolna, the lord provides the wine and obliges the inn-keeper to sell it at a certain price which he fixes, and for which the other is accountable after the deduction of one-tenth for spillage, and a certain per centage for profit. In most instances this is done to obtain a ready and certain sale for an inferior quality of wine of their own growth, but in some also from a desire of protecting the peasant against the extortion of the inn-keeper, and to provide him with a wholesome article at a moderate price. In either case the wine is generally very little to be commended; its consumers are principally the peasants, and what they desire is something cheap and intoxicating: they cannot see the use of drinking what will not make them drunk. The whole blame must not, therefore, be thrown on the privileged order. All this, however, we did not know at the time; they told us the wine was *herrsechaftlich* (seignoral,) and that Princc Eszterházy was the *Grund Herr*, whence it followed quite naturally that we most sincerely wished his Highness the misfortune—and no slight one either—of being obliged for one night to drink his own wine.

I have often been surprised that a small quantity of good wine in bottles is not also supplied for the sake of travellers of a better class; for though rarer in Hungary than in many other countries, they are still in sufficient numbers to make it answer. But the spirit of privilege is sadly opposed to speculation and improvement. At present, when a gentleman makes a two or three days' journey from home, he generally carries wine and provisions with him, or makes use of his friends' houses as hotels on the road.

The next morning was Sunday; and as we prepared to quit Szolna, the people were coming out of church, and marching to

their homes with that steady, demure, and somewhat severe look which distinguishes the Protestant, find him where you will.

Some of the women wore curious caps of rich, stiff, black lace; a national dress, now quite out of fashion among the young and gay. I could not help noticing two of these old caps, which met under one of the arcades, and after due salutations commenced a combat of words attended with such mysterious shakes of the head and holding up of the hands, that I am sure nothing but a backsliding of some younger cap could have excited so great an interest.

At a short distance from Szolna we crossed the Waag on a raft of very primitive construction. It was composed of two canoes formed of the trunks of trees hollowed out, much in the manner of that of Robinson Crusoe, between which were placed a row of planks, and on these were launched a carriage, four horses, and about half a dozen people. Forced by necessity and trusting to the knowledge of the peasants who acted as ferrymen, we placed ourselves on this frail bark, and landed very safely on the other side. It must require good nerves to cross this place with a carriage in stormy weather.

Turning a little out of the direct road, we reached the village of Teplitz, tempted by a report we had heard that the body of Sophia Bosnyák, the first wife of the Palatine Wesselényi, was preserved in the church there quite fresh.

The memory of this lady is held by the peasants in almost sacred respect. The castle of Strecsno, about a mile from Teplitz, and placed on a high rock just over the Waag, was her usual residence. Sophia is described as one of those mild and loving wives whose deep affection can suffer in silence more easily than upbraid or resent, and Wesselenyi, as a bold warrior, whose manly beauty and rough virtues had completely won the soft heart of his at first unwilling bride. Often was the young wife left alone in the strong castle to watch for the return of her lord from those wars in which the restless Turk kept Hungary so constantly engaged, and the conclusion of the campaign brought him back the same faithful and tender husband he had left it.

After some time, however, Sophia observed a change in her husband's manner, on his return from absences that became more frequent, and seemed less called for than formerly; till at last the rumour reached even her ears that Wesselényi spent his time more agreeably than in combating the Turks,—in short, that she had a rival in her husband's heart, and that on his next re-

turn he intended to change his religion and separate from her for ever. Alarmed at this news, which her own observation but too well confirmed, the poor wife gave way to the bitterness of despair. One evening, when she had wept herself to sleep, thinking of her misfortunes, a bright vision appeared to her which she at once recognised as that of Our Lady of Strecsno, whose picture hung over the altar in the little chapel on the rock, and smiled consolation and peace on the stricken heart. When she awoke, she hastened with naked feet and pilgrim's staff, in spite of the darkness of the night, and the pitiless driving of a winter's storm, to visit the chapel of the Virgin, and to render thanks to her protectress for the comfort she had sent her.

Next morning saw Wesselényi's return; but the frown had left his brow, the cold look was no longer in his eyes, and as he pressed his Sophia in his arms, she felt herself once more the loved, the happy wife. On the anniversary of that day Sophia ever made her pilgrimage, barefoot and alone, to the shrine of her protectress, and after death she was buried in the little chapel on the rock.

About fifty years later, when the castle and chapel of Strecsno were destroyed in the civil wars of the Tökölys, the body of Sophia was found still whole and fresh. Among the peasants, by whom her memory was revered for her charity and benevolence, the body was regarded as that of a saint, and carefully removed to the church of Teplitz. Here it remains to this day, and albeit unsanctioned by Rome, has as many devoted pilgrims, and performs as many miracles as any saint in the calendar.

We sought out the village priest to obtain permission to see the church and its wonders. In so poor a part of the country and so small a village, I expected a priest of corresponding modesty; but the good father of Teplitz seemed in no way to partake of the scarcity of the land. As we were shown into the house by a naked-footed waiting maid, we found a comfortable dwelling, neat and in good order, while the dining-room was set out for dinner, with covers for eighteen or twenty guests, and that not in any meagre style, but with goodly bottles of wine between every two covers, the table spread with a clean table-cloth, and every plate furnished with a napkin.

The priest himself, who received us very politely and spoke German, was a portly man to whom the pleasures of this world did not seem altogether strange. Since I have known more of Hungary, and of the priesthood in particular, I have not been able to understand why the good father did not invite us to dine

with him, for of all the hospitable Hungarians, no one is more so than the parish priest. I remember that on another occasion, when travelling with two Hungarians, we arrived just about nightfall in a village where there was but a very poor inn; the priest of the parish no sooner heard that strangers were in the village, than he came up to the carriages, and, after merely bowing to us, ordered the coachman to drive into his yard, not supposing that even a verbal invitation was required, so much did he consider it a matter of course that we should remain with him. Now as we were four persons, with two servants, two peasant coachmen and their eight horses; and, moreover, as three of us were quite unknown, we determined to decline the invitation, fearing that so large a party would inconvenience a poor parish priest, though we were certain that the hospitality was heartily offered. Never shall I forget the mournful look of the good man when he clearly comprehended that we declined his courtesy; he argued on the folly of the thing; assured us his accommodations were good; and at last seemed so seriously hurt that we were fain to comply. The English reader may wonder what he did with us all. The horses were turned on the village common, to which all such travellers' horses have a right; the peasants slept in the stable, the servants in the carriages, and we were furnished with two as good double-bedded rooms as I could wish to sleep in. After offering us pipes, the priest conducted us to some object in the neighbourhood, which we wished to see ere it grew dark, and on our return we found the table not only well but handsomely spread; and the supper, consisting of soup, stewed fowls, vegetables, sweets, and roasted venison, with a dessert, was excellent. The wine, of which our host did not partake,—indeed of the whole supper he ate but slightly,—was better than I had met with for many a day before. His smart hussar waited on us as footman. The conversation of the priest showed him to be a man of considerable information, and of by no means a bigoted mind; indeed to me it appeared almost a fault, that he spoke in so slighting a manner of some of the observances of his religion, particularly, I remember, the necessity of performing mass on an empty stomach, which he ridiculed as one of those follies useful only to influence an ignorant people. I believe this tone is not very uncommon among the Catholic clergy of the Continent who wish to pass for men of enlightened minds,—at least, in the company of Protestants; in Italy I heard it more than once. In speaking of persecution for religion, he denounced its injustice with great

warmth, and instanced Ireland and O'Connell as an example of the greater wisdom of the present age. The name of O'Connell, throughout all Hungary, we found a watchword among the liberal Catholics, and many were the questions we were asked about his eloquence, talent, and appearance. He seems to be considered a living testimony that Catholicism and even ultra-liberalism are by no means inconsistent.

I believe I must let the reader into a little secret which our night's residence in the priest's family disclosed to us; for it is said to be rather characteristic of the class. In the next room to that in which we slept, we heard the chattering, the stifled laugh, the scolding, and the slap, which declared those mischievous mortals, children, to be not far off. In fact, our host, in his younger days, had yielded to the forbidden temptation; and instead, as he grew older, of patching up his conscience for heaven by driving away the partner and offspring of his errors, he had installed her in the office of his housekeeper, and given shelter to the children under the convenient title of nephews and nieces. This sort of thing is said to be of not unfrequent occurrence; and the prudent guest of the Hungarian priest should never look too admiringly at any pretty handmaid who may chance to serve his supper; nor ask too particularly as to the parentage of any little tale-tellers he may see about the parsonage,—though I believe, of the two, the latter would be the least offensive.

But to return to the priest of Teplitz, who did not ask us to dinner, but conducted us to the church. Service was just about to commence, and the body of the church was crowded with peasants; the married women on one side, with a head dress of white linen, in form much like that of the statues of Nemesis, and the men on the other, while the maidens, with their long bands of braided hair hanging down the back, crowded round the steps of the altar. In a side chapel, built in imitation of that of our Lady of Loretto, which—as the priest observed, with a very intelligible smile of incredulity—came from the Holy Land, we found the body of Sophia. The priest unlocked a painted coffin-shaped box, and there lay the mummy in a modern dress of black silk, the face shrunk, and the extremities dry and hard, but the fleshy parts still retaining their soft and flesh-like feeling. Some of the peasants crowded round to catch a glimpse of their favourite saint—the box was reclosed and locked—we thanked the priest for his attention, and passed on our way to visit the castle.

At Várin, we were obliged to leave the carriage, as the road

by the side of the Waag was no longer passable; and following the course of the river on foot for about an hour, we came opposite Strecsno, where we fortunately found the ferry boats ready to start. These, like the others we had before seen, were only canoes joined together by a cord, and pushed over by two men, one placed at either end. Each canoe, besides these men, contained not less than five or six women, laden with immense sacks. To prevent accidents from the wind, the women knelt down; and holding the sides to keep themselves steady, remained in that position, quite still, till they arrived at the other side and were allowed to rise.

The castle of Strecsno is beautifully situated and very extensive. The rock on which it stands is a black limestone,* rising precipitously from the river. Here, as well as at Csejta, we observed a great quantity of recent bones falling down the sides of the mountain with the débris of the rock; and, in the former instance, we found they proceeded from the interior of the ruins, where we picked some up. They were principally bones of sheep, hares, birds, and other small animals, with a few that might have belonged to oxen or horses. We were quite puzzled to account for their presence; foxes or wolves, we knew, would have eaten the small bones and gnawed the larger, which was not the case; and we did not think that any bird of prey could have carried them; but just as we passed under the ruins, the harsh croaking of a raven caught our ears, and reminded us that Csejta had been similarly tenanted.

As we had left Stephan with the carriage, and the peasants we met spoke only Sclavackish, we were not able to make any inquiries as to the distance to Margita; a narrow and dangerous pass in the navigation of the Waag, not very far from Strecsno, and which we wished to visit. The Margita is a name given to three or four rocks in the middle of the river, so called from a luckless maid, whom the jealousy of a cruel step-mother condemned to an untimely grave in this wild spot. Since that time, the wandering spirit of Margita hovers over these rocks, and demands one life every year for the bridegroom she was robbed of; —nor is it without fear and trembling, that the poor float-men, who fully believe the story, approach the spot which may condemn them to a phantom bride and a watery couch.

* This point is worth the geologist's examination: within two hundred yards I observed two different limestones, followed by grauwacke, and that again by granite.

CHAPTER V.

VALLEY OF THE WAAG.

A Specimen of Vorspann Driving.—The Jew of Tyerhova and Sir Walter Scott.—Diffusion of English Literature.—Valley of Wratna.—A Jewish Landlady.—Sheep and Cattle of Northern Hungary.—The Pupor.—Roads in Arva.—The Alás and the Juden Knipe.—County of Arva.—Castle of Arva.——Peter Varda.—George Thurzo.—Flogging Block.—Rosenberg.—Church of St. Marie.—Inn at St. Miklós.—Cavern of Demenfalva.—Ice Pillars.—Hradek.—Wood Cutting and Floating.

On resuming our journey, we had rather a curious specimen of Vorspann driving. As is very often the case, the horses belonged to two different peasants, and had not only never run together, but one had never before drawn at all. The harness consisted of one thin rope round the neck, and two others attached to the carriage in the form of traces. One of the peasants was upon the box, while the other mounted the near wheeler, seated on his great coat instead of a saddle, and drove the four horses by means of his long whip and the string round the neck of the near leader.

In stopping his horses, the gentlest *wo!*—by the by, *wo* and *gee!* or something very like them, are used in Hungary, as with us—was sufficient for the purpose, but to guide them was another affair. The colt, which was the near leader, did not like drawing, and the others seemed to have different predilections as to the route they should take. As we started out of the village at full gallop,—an Hungarian coachman always starts at a gallop,—we first took off the corner of a cottage roof, then quarrelled with a heap of manure, next rushed up a steep bank, and at last, thanks to the self-willed colt, found ourselves safe in a peasant's court-yard. After some time we regained the road; but it would not do; one would go this way, and another that. The only plan to keep them together was to continue the gallop; but the road was now in the dried-up bed of a river, and respect for the springs obliged us to go slowly, so that I, at last, made the other peasant mount the unruly leader, and we got on rather

better for the rest of the stage. Such travelling may appear dangerous to those who are not used to it, and who do not know what a carriage can do without overturning; but it is much less so than it appears, for these horses are so unaccustomed to be managed by others, that they have acquired a stock of good sense and a knowledge of the ways, which enables them to take care of themselves as well or better than their masters could do. One of our high-bred, high-fed, and well-guided animals, if once he gets his head, runs he knows not whither,—he sees no danger, and heeds no check till a fall brings him to his senses. The Vorspann horse, however, is not troubled with over-breeding or over-feeding; and though he may sometimes prefer a different route to that proposed, or even decline drawing at all, he never plays any of those perilous and foolish tricks which render his English prototype the fear of city aldermen and aged spinsters. The moral of all which is—that the enjoyment of liberty, especially when combined with simplicity and poverty, makes horses, as well as men, wise in the employment of it.

While we were waiting for fresh horses before the little "*Juden knipe*,"—for by this contemptuous epithet, answering to "Jew's pot-house," Stephan always designated an inn kept by a Jew,—at the station next Tyerhova, one of the tribe of Israel came up and asked us if we would like to see some curious rocks, only a quarter of an hour from the village. As we followed him to the spot, he asked those questions, as to where we came from, what we were doing, and whither we were going, so common in most countries except our own, where they are avoided, as though every one was doing something of which he was ashamed, and which he desired to conceal. On hearing that we were English, he asked very earnestly if one Walter Scott was yet living, and expressed the greatest regret when he learnt his death. Surprised at such a sentiment from such a man, and suspecting some mistake, I inquired what he knew of Scott, when he pulled from his pocket a well-thumbed German translation of Ivanhoe,—the very romance of persecuted Judaism,—and assured me he had read that and many others of his works with the greatest pleasure. I do not know that I ever felt more strongly the universal power of genius than when I found the bard of Scotland worshipped by a poor Jew in the mountains of Hungary.

It is astonishing to an Englishman who knows how ignorant even well-informed persons of his own country are of the literature and politics of a great part of the Continent, to find the

names of the best authors of England familiar as household words among nations of whose very existence the greater part of that country is scarcely aware. In Hungary, this fact struck me with more force even than in Germany, though the taste for English literature is there immeasurably more advanced than in France or Italy. But the Hungarians, with very little literature of their own, and generally possessing a knowledge of several foreign languages, are not only entirely thrown on the resources of others for their mental food, but are thus eminently well provided with the means of enjoying it. In many cases I have found the originals in English, but in general, they are read in excellent German translations. With what ecstatic pleasure have they told me of the new light which English literature opened to them? with what admiration have they spoken of the strong and vigorous train of thought which pervades our authors, of that scrupulous decency which they observe, of that warm love of nature they express, and of the universal respect in which religion is upheld by them! A great cause of this extension of English literature, has been the judicious selection and the cheap form in which Galignani and other foreign booksellers have published the standard English works; and, however disadvantageous this traffic may have been to the pockets of British authors, I am quite sure it has been a very important means in establishing and diffusing their own, and their country's reputation. Shakspeare, Byron, Scott, and Bulwer, are the names best known; and though it may startle the English reader to find the name of a living candidate for fame ranked so high among these immortal dead, yet it must be confessed that the reading Continent has generally placed him there. Whether the English public will confirm the award when time shall have removed the clouds of party prejudice and personal pique which so often obscure our judgment of living genius, I dare not venture to conjecture.

The valley of Wratna, to which our guide led us, is a very narrow pass, the opening of which is closed by a mill and a pretty waterfall, formed by a wild little mountain torrent, which, tumbling, roaring, and gushing over broken rocks and down steep precipices, has at last cut itself a way out, while the mountains above are pinnacled in a more fantastic manner even than those of Szulyon. We discovered the likeness of all manner of heads, arches, holes, animals, and I know not what besides, the more interesting from their sharp and clear outlines, which they

owe to the hard limestone in which they are formed. We may probably thank Scott for the pleasure of this scene; for it is rare that the uneducated have a relish for the beauties of nature, and still rarer that they think of leading others to enjoy that pleasure, except where the traveller's gold has disclosed to the greedy mountaineer more beauty in his native rocks than he himself e'er dreamt of.

As we returned to the inn, the Jewish landlady, of whose really uncommon beauty we had obtained a glance before, notwithstanding old Stephan's rebuff,—for, as I said before, he hated pretty women—now came to talk to us. Those large black eyes, spite of their quiet coquetry—Jews, Turks, or Christians, women are alike coquettes,—were not come to waste their battery on us, however, without some hope of turning it to profit; for, after awhile, their fair possessor expatiated on the bad accommodation we were likely to meet with further on, and offered us, as consolation, some champagne, which she assured us was excellent. It is very probable old Stephan guessed the object of her parley,—and, perhaps, suspected his master's weakness in favour of black eyes,—at any rate, he looked most alarmingly cross when ordered to pay what he grumbled at as an exorbitant price for the bottles our pretty Jewess carefully stowed away in the pockets of the carriage.

As we slowly ascended the hill leading from Tyerhova, we picked up a fine salamander, marked with remarkably bright yellow blotches on a black ground.

The sheep in this part of the country are quite different from the merinos we observed in other parts. They are large-boned animals, with a particularly long and coarse wool, and with spiral horns, often turning directly upwards; in fact, just what Bewick has figured under the name of Wallachian sheep.* The cattle are of a poor, small, mixed breed, resembling our worst Irish, and very unlike the large white, or dun ox of the plains, which is equal, if not superior in beauty, to that of Rome.

We had now to cross the Pupor, a mountain connecting the two ridges of the Carpathians, between which we had been travelling all along the valley of the Waag, and which that river itself has cut through near Strecsno, and we were therefore provided with six horses and three drivers; but, notwithstanding the shouting and flogging of the men, which seemed quite as hard

* I believe this name is improperly given; for I have never seen this sheep in Wallachia, nor indeed any where but in the northern part of Hungary.

work as the dragging of the horses, we progressed but very slowly, and, as we gained the summit, we had only light enough just to perceive the beautiful valley we were entering. Before we finished the descent, the moon had risen, and showed us dimly a narrow gorge hemmed in on each side by precipitous hills, black with the solemn pine, except where the rocks broke through and exposed their bare crags, while the bottom was occupied by a river, from which the road had been robbed as it were, so much did it seem to have encroached on the usual bed of the stream. To our surprise, instead of the tossing and jolting we had endured the whole day, we now found ourselves rolling along as smoothly as over a gravel walk. The only explanation we could get from the peasants was, that we were now in the county of Arva. They probably thought that no one could be ignorant of the fact, that though surrounded on all sides by the worst roads in Hungary, and though one of the poorest and most mountainous counties in the land, Arva without exception was in possession of the very best roads. Such is the fact; probably an abundance of material, and a greater unity in the administration of the county than usual, will account for it.

For two hours we continued along this valley, with scarcely a sign of human habitation till we arrived at Parnicza, where we had determined to pass the night, almost sorry to have quitted a scene which the dim moon-light may perhaps have invested with an interest and romance it might want at another time.

Every country inn in Hungary is provided with an *álsá*, or huge barn-like building, which serves as carriage-house and stable, and very often as bed-room too, for the peasants generally sleep in or under their wagons when on a journey. Into this *álás* the traveller is usually driven—if during the day, to protect him from heat or cold till the horses arrive,—if at night, that his carriage may be safely locked up; and here it seemed probable that we must pass the night, for Stephan declared it impossible to sleep in the inn. Knowing the old hussar's horror of a Jew,—and this he had declared was the most miserable *Juden knipe* in the world,—I thought it best to look for myself, and a miserable place I found it. The house consisted only of two rooms, one in which the family lived and slept, and where the peasants drank and smoked, and the other a *gast-zimmer* or guest-room, which they offered us. It had no floor but the hardened clay; no furniture but a table, a bench, and one or two chairs, with two boxes about four feet long, meant for beds. The whole, how-

ever, was not so dirty as I had expected, and I thought it any rate better than the *álás*. And now Stephan appeared in all his glory, for so soon as he found my choice was fixed he determined to make the best he could of it; and stripping the carriage of its cushions, and pressing into the service every convertible object, by the aid of chairs, bench, and table, he constructed two beds, not only comfortable, but with all the neat and bed-like appearance which a poet would say invites one to repose. In the mean time we had been inquiring into the contents of our host's larder; black bread, salt, and spirits, were literally the only articles the house,—or they said the village,—could furnish. Fortunately the pretty Jewess of Tyerhova had pressed a Dutch cheese upon us as well as the wine, and with these and the white bread, of which we always carried a supply, we made a very hearty supper. As glass after glass of the sparkling wine made every thing look brighter and more comfortable, how often did we bless the black-eyed unbeliever for thinking we liked champagne!

The next morning, before mid-day, we arrived at Arva, a little town which gives its name to the most northerly county of Hungary, in which the roads are good and every thing else is bad. The greater part of this county once belonged to the powerful family of Thurzo, whose last male heir possessed out of the ninety-seven towns and villages, which the county contains, no less than eighty-two, and these at his death he bequeathed to his daughters and their descendants. Up to the present day this property has never been divided. The joint heirs now amount to upwards of sixty, from whom one is chosen as director, who administers the estate for the common benefit of all. The annual net revenue, when the expenses of administration are deducted, amounts to only 12,000*l.*, of which the share of some of the parties is not more than a few shillings yearly.

The castle, which crowns the summit of a conical rock, on the banks of the pretty river Arva, is composed of three stories, or rather distinct castles, built on three different heights directly over each other.

A steep ascent leads to the outer gateway, which opens on a circular road, strongly defended by pierced casemates, now used as prisons. The first castle occupies a flat platform of rock, and contains the chapel and some other buildings still in good repair, and inhabited. On the second part, which is reached by a flight of broad steps, the greatest care has been bestowed, and it still

bears traces of considerable elegance. Some remains of painting on the outer walls, show that Arva, like many other castles in Hungary, was once painted externally. This part, as well as the upper portion, unfortunately suffered much from fire a few years since; and though the walls are covered with roofing, which will prevent any very speedy decay, it is much to be regretted that the proprietors of the estates have not the spirit to restore the castle to its former condition. It will indeed be a deep disgrace to the descendants of Thurzo, should they allow Arva to fall to decay,—a castle, interesting as one of the best specimens of Gothic castellated architecture in Europe, and intimately connected with the history of Hungary, and with the greatness of those from whom the present possessors derive their property. The upper castle is built on the very point of the rock to which it seems to cling for support, and is said to be the most ancient portion of it, though several of the doorways bear the inscription "Impensis Francisci Thurzo, erectu. an. 1561," which, however, probably refers only to some alterations or additions.

In one part of the castle I was shown a recess, not a yard wide, constructed in the thickness of the wall, and so small that a person could only just sit or stand in it, and with no other opening than a hole through which food might be put; there, it is said, and I believe on good authority, that Mathias Corvinus confined the archbishop of Kalocsa, Peter Várda, for five years. He is said to have been incensed against the churchman, because of a mistake he had committed in drawing up a treaty with the Turks, of which they took great advantage; and on discovering which, the haughty Mathias boxed the blunderer's ears and sent him to prison, with the bitter pun "Petre, Arva (in Hungarian, orphan) fuisti, Arva eris, et in Arva morieris."

On returning to the lower castle, one of the bailiffs opened the chapel for me, that I might see what he evidently considered as the chief pride of Arva,—the marble statue and monument of George Thurzo, Count of Arva and Palatine of Hungary. Among the Protestants of Hungary, the name of George Thurzo is held in the highest veneration; for under his fostering protection the new religion held its synods, elected its superintendents, established its schools, and obtained a degree of power and respect to which it never afterwards reached. Like many other of the early opponents of Roman corruption, however, Thurzo was cruel and bigoted in the support of his own creed, and we

find him refusing to others the liberty of conscience he demanded for himself.

A disgusting sight greeted us as we left the castle. Under the gateway, which was as usual hung with instruments of punishment, the flogging board, a low table on which the sufferer is stretched out and fastened down, was laid ready, apparently for immediate use; two or three Haiduks, in their gay uniform, standing prepared to operate. At this time, the law still allowed the seigneur, on his own authority, or his bailiff's, to order twenty-five blows, as a summary punishment to the peasant. Happily this law is now no longer in existence; and though flogging is still a legal punishment, it can only be inflicted after a regular trial and condemnation.

In our journey through the county of Arva, and indeed generally in the north of Hungary, we were struck with the number of Jews we met; in fact, we began to think the Emperor of Austria had more right than we suspected to his title of "King of Jerusalem."

They are easily recognised, rather by their peculiarly cunning humility of aspect than by their dress, though it is sufficiently remarkable that, instead of imitating the peasants of the country in which they live, they always make themselves conspicuous by a shabby showy attempt at a more civilized costume. It is melancholy to see the degraded state to which this people are reduced; nothing can be more wretchedly humble than the salutation of the Arva Jew, nothing can more eloquently proclaim how necessary freedom is to the ennoblement of man. I know not why, but every where the mass of the Jews appear filthy and poor. No one can deny their greedy desire for wealth, their industry, and their temperance; and yet we find them abounding the most in poor countries, and appearing there the poorest and most miserable. Living by trade, they seem to shun those nations where trade prospers best; almost every where deprived of the rights of citizens, they seek most those countries where they are most despised and persecuted. In England, with the exception of some few great capitalists, the Jews have but little influence on our commerce; in Poland, nothing can be bought or sold without their intervention. Under liberal governments, where they might enjoy protection and justice, they are scarce; but in Turkey, where I have seen an angry Moslem cut off a Jew's ears because he could not bargain with him, every second man you meet is a Jew.

In Hungary, the greater part of the trade is carried on by means of Jews, who, from their command of ready money in a country where that commodity is scarce, enjoy peculiar facilities. The Jew early in spring makes his tour round the country, and bargains beforehand with the gentry for their wool, their wine, their corn, or whatever other produce they may have to dispose of. The temptation of a part, or sometimes the whole, of the cash down, to men who are ever ready to anticipate their incomes, generally assures the Jew an advantageous bargain. It does occasionally happen that the biter is bit, that the noble cheats the Jew—either in refusing to hold to his bargain, or by fulfilling it unfairly, both of which the peculiar state of the Hungarian law allows him to do, with a great chance at least of impunity. I have heard of a case in which the Jew, after waiting some time for the arrival of a quantity of corn for which he had bargained some months before, received the intelligence that the noble had determined not to sell for less than double the sum agreed on, as the current price had increased so much since his agreement was made, but in consideration of his disappointment the Hebrew was considerately offered the first refusal at the double price. Indignant at such impudent roguery, the Jew, forgetting for once his prudence, reproached the noble in no measured terms, and it was thought very fortunate that he escaped without corporal as well as pecuniary damage. Not very long since a Jew was beaten by a noble at Pest, because he complained, somewhat loudly, that the wool which the other had sent him was in a dirty and unsaleable state. Let it not be supposed that these cases are common, they are very rare, and the persons guilty of them are marked with infamy. But such reports, carefully spread by the Jews to keep other dealers out of the market, and the knowledge that the privileges of the noble and the imperfect state of the laws render it extremely difficult to enforce the fulfilment of a contract, have frightened away respectable merchants, and have conspired with other causes to deprive the Hungarians of the advantages which a more regular and direct commerce would confer. It would be as unjust to judge of the character of the English by the reports of fraudulent bankruptcy cases, as of the Hungarians by these tales of the dishonesty of some of their nobles. They will be a warning, however, to the foreign merchant where the law is insufficient for his protection, to trade only with those whose characters are known to him.

The Jews are also employed by the nobles as men of business,

as tenants or middlemen, as distillers and as publicans. From their ability, knowledge of business, and extensive connexion, they are, when honest, invaluable in such situations; but they sometimes deceive the confidence reposed in them, and make away with large sums of money, which are conveyed to some of the tribe in Poland, or other countries, where it is impossible for justice to extract a kreutzer, so close and secret is the connexion they maintain amongst each other.

The Jew is no less active in profiting by the vices and necessities of the peasant than by those of the noble. As sure as he gains a settlement in a village, the peasantry become poor. Whenever the peasant is in want of money, whether from the occurrence of misfortune, or to make merry at his marriage feast, or to render due honour to his patron saint, the Jew is always ready to find it for him,—of course at exorbitant interest. All the peasant has to repay with is the next year's crop, and that he willingly pledges, trusting to chance or his landlord's kindness to support him during the winter. In this way the crop is often sold as soon as it is sown, and for the rest of the year the peasant finds himself bound hand and foot to his hard creditor. On this account I have known many gentlemen refuse to let a Jew live in their villages, and rather lend money to their peasants themselves where they saw the need of it, and allow them to pay it back in labour.

The Jews enjoy the privilege of free worship in Hungary, on the payment of a yearly tax of 16,000*l*.—a disgrace to Hungary as a free and constitutional country, from which it is to be hoped she will soon clear herself. But it ill becomes an Englishman to reproach another land for bigotry in this respect, while he sees the Jews still deprived of political rights in his own country.

We cannot feel astonished at the sentiment of hatred and contempt with which the Hungarian, whether noble or peasant, regards the Jew, who fawns on him, submits to his insults, and panders to his vices, that he may the more securely make him his prey: but we cannot help feeling how richly the Christian has deserved this at the Hebrew's hands; for, by depriving him of the right of citizenship, of the power of enjoying landed property, and even of the feeling of personal security, he has prevented his taking an interest in the welfare of the state he lives in, has obliged him to retain the fruits of his industry in a portable and easily convertible form, has forced him, in short, to be a money-lender, whose greatest profit springs from the misery of

his neighbours,—a merciless oppression, and indeed a merciless retribution.

As we returned to the valley of the Waag we passed the little town of Kubin, behind which appears the imposing outline of the Kolpan mountain. Kubin, with its gable-ended house, built like all the others in Arva of the unhewn stems of the fir, notched into each other at the corners, and plastered over with mud, and whitewashed, is a pretty little place, and H—— gladly availed himself of the delay of the ever-dilatory Vorspann, to transfer a memorial of its chief street and its modest hemp-dresser to his sketch-book.

Although the soil and climate of Arva are any thing but genial, they seem to suit the cultivation of flax and hemp. Of the former, in particular, a large quantity is produced, which is manufactured into linen in the houses of the peasants, and sold over the whole of Hungary, and even as far as Turkey. The hemp harvest was now going on. It lasts a long time; for they only draw out at once those stems which happen to be ripe at the time, thereby allowing the others space to grow up and ripen in their turn. When gathered and dried, the hemp is soaked for a fortnight or three weeks in stagnant water, exposed to a hot sun, that its outer bark may putrefy and fall off. When this process is considered perfect, the women go into the filthy ponds which contain the hemp, where they may be seen by the dozen, standing up to the middle in the black mud, handing it out to others on the bank. After drying in the sun, the hemp is next dressed to disencumber it of its now brittle covering, which is effected by passing it frequently under a wooden chopper, fixed in a small frame. The cost of dressing is so great, that half the quantity is given to the dressers for their trouble. I have heard a person connected with the navy of England declare that the Hungarian hemp is both cheaper and better than that of Russia, and that he was sure it would one day drive the other out of the English market.*

We required no map to tell us where the boundaries of Ar-

* I have heard with very great pleasure that a contract for the supply of the British dock-yards with hemp, is in future likely to be given to an enterprising Vienna merchant, and that the greater part of it will come from Hungary. I hail this as a favourable omen for the commencement of commercial relations between the two countries: and it is not unpleasant to think that our navy will no longer depend for its supplies on a nation which must sooner or later declare itself our enemy, but on one which circumstances and inclination alike induce to be our friend.

va ceased, for the road seemed of a sudden to come to an end, and, from the science of MacAdam, we found ourselves at once literally reduced to the resources of nature; the road was, for the most part, a mere track: sometimes we dashed through the brooks which crossed our path, sometimes trusted ourselves to a few pine trunks, carelessly thrown across the stream, and called a bridge. I am not generally nervous in such matters, and yet I can assure the reader I never crossed one of these bridges, which in other parts of the country are only too common, without a very uncomfortable feeling; nor will he be astonished at this when I tell him that they always tremble, and often crack under the weight of a carriage, and I have even seen holes in them through which a man and horse might easily disappear.

The ruins of Likawa gave additional interest to the wild valley along which we journeyed. This castle was formerly the property of John Corvinus, the natural son of King Mathias, who, though intended as his successor by the father, seems to have yielded, with little opposition, to the accession of Wladislaus; and, like our own Richard Cromwell, to have contentedly resigned his claim to a throne for the privacy of the peaceful subject.

The first object worthy of notice which occurred, on regaining our favourite valley of the Waag, to which a few more hours of travelling conducted us, was the little church of Szent Maria, said to have been the first Christian temple erected in Hungary. Though prettily situated, recent alterations have destroyed much of the interest its interior might formerly have had for the antiquary or artist. It is surrounded by a strong wall with parapets and port-holes, probably not without their use when Christianity was struggling with Paganism for the mastery of the land.

On inquiring at the parsonage for admission, the priest came out; and, addressing us in Latin, brought us the keys and showed us the wonders of this little church. As the good man spoke no German, I was obliged to muster up the recollections of my college days, and was glad to find them fresh enough to enable me to make myself understood, and to comprehend at least a part of his answers in return. The body of the church is by far the oldest part; few distinctive marks of antiquity have survived the many repairs it has been subject to, except three round arches supported on octagonal pillars, with grotesquely ornamented capitals, in a style which I think clearly establishes for it a Byzantine origin. This circumstance is rendered the more interest-

ing, from the fact that the first Hungarians converted to Christianity were baptized in Constantinople; and it has been matter of bitter controversy, whether the glory of Hungary's original conversion should not be ascribed to the eastern Church. Before the nation itself adopted the new religion, there were, however, a great number of Christian prisoners in Hungary, and amongst others, many Byzantine Greeks; and it may have been to some of these that the Church of St. Maria owes its origin.

The chancel, of a much later date, is in the pointed Gothic style, with a small niche of very rich workmanship. There is an old picture here of the History of Christ, in compartments, now much injured, but interesting fróm the circumstance of its being painted on a ground-work of silver foil, which appears through, as well in the glories of the saints, as in other parts where the colour has fallen off. There are several inscriptions on the tombstones, which form the pavement of the church; but they were so obscured by dirt, that it was impossible to decipher them. At St. Miklós, a few miles further on, we had determined to take up our quarters and to reconnoitre the country round, as we had heard that there was in its vicinity one of those extraordinary caverns which abound in Hungary, and which we wished to visit.

The inn at St. Miklós, notwithstanding its size and promising appearance, was one of the worst we had yet met with. In addition to incivility, we had filth in its worst forms; and in answer to our request for dinner, we got only a sulky reply, that there was nothing in the house. But if the day was uncomfortable, how shall I describe the feverish horrors of the night? Driven from the bed,—for this once I had neglected my precautions,—I in vain sought to repose on chairs or table; and at last I fairly ran away, and wrapping myself in my cloak, slept in the carriage till morning. I make it a matter of conscience to recount these minor miseries, that those who undertake a journey in Hungary, may not feel disappointed if they meet some few disagreeables by the way, though, to say the truth, I am obliged constantly to refer to my note-book, or I should not remember one half of them. So happily is human nature constituted, that mere bodily pains, however they may annoy us at the time, are quickly forgotten; it is this which makes the recollection of our travels often so much pleasanter than the travels themselves.

Having applied the evening before for permission to visit the cavern of Demenfalva, to a gentleman of the name of Kubin,

on whose property it is situated, and having been kindly promised by his lady, who received us in his absence, that she would find us guides, and make every necessary provision for our visiting it, we started for the village of Demenfalva; when being provided with a guide, we drove on to the cavern, about five miles distant. I shall not easily forget that drive. We were in a light carriage of the country, without springs, and had to pass along the rocky bed of a mountain torrent. It is almost impossible for a carriage of this description to fall over, but it required all our care to avoid falling out; for every turn of the wheel brought it over huge masses of rock, from which it fell down again with a shake that seemed to dislocate every bone in our bodies.

At last we came in sight of the cavern's mouth,—a small hole at a considerable height on the side of a limestone mountain, in a very wild and beautiful valley. Here another guide awaited us, both being as savage-looking fellows as I ever saw, and unfortunately ignorant of any other language than Sclavackish. The entrance, not more than three feet high, opens into a high passage, which descends rather suddenly for several hundred feet, and leads into the first cavern, the roof and floor of which are beset with stalactites and stalagmites, though not of any great size. From thence, we descended by a broken and very rotten ladder into a larger cavern, out of which a low archway conducted us to the great curiosity of Demenfalva, the ice grotto. In the centre of this grotto, which is rather small, rises a column of beautifully clear ice, about seven feet high, on which the water falls as it drops from the ceiling, and immediately freezes. The floor is one mass of thick ice. Still lower in the same direction is a much larger chamber, where an ice pillar of several feet in thickness reaches from the roof to the floor. It is formed of small, irregularly rounded crystals of ice, of about the size of drops of water, which reflected most brilliantly the light of our torches as it fell on them.

It is the presence of the ice in this cavern, and the various shapes it puts on, which imparts to Demenfalva its peculiar interest and beauty. We have already seen it forming the slender column and the stately pillar; a little further on it presents in wonderful exactness, the beautiful appearance of a frozen waterfall; in one place it hangs in such graceful and delicate folds, that the statuary might borrow it as the beau idéal of his drapery; while in another it mocks the elaborate fretwork of the

Gothic roof. It was singular to observe the apparent uncertainty as to whether ice or solid limestone should result from the water which trickled through the roof; in one instance, where the roof of the cavern was covered with hard limestone stalactites, the floor was composed of icy stalagmites. It seemed as though the one or the other was indifferently formed. To what this circumstance is owing,—in what respect Demenfalva differs from other caves where limestone deposits take place, but where there is no ice formed, I cannot say. Ice is also found in an old mine at Herrengrund, as well as in one or two other caverns in Hungary. That of Herrengrund is remarkable as having only begun to form on the miners opening an old shaft, and as having proceeded so fast as to oblige them to discontinue their workings. It is said still to go on increasing, though much is consumed in summer by the inhabitants of Neusohl, for whom it forms a common ice-house,—nay, so well does it answer this purpose, that the greater the heat of the summer the more rapidly is the ice said to increase.

As far as I am aware, no satisfactory explanation has been given of this phenomenon. At Demenfalva there was no perceptible draught of air which our lights, if not our feelings, would have indicated; nor, as far as I could judge (my thermometer was broken,) was it at all colder here than in Adelsberg or Aggtelek. The stratum,—a compact limestone,—is the same in all those caverns I have seen, and the quantity of moisture differs but little.

After sketching the second ice grotto, we passed onward into a long cavern with a Gothic arched roof, containing a number of stalactite pillars of beautiful forms. The floor was here no longer of stone or ice, but covered with a very fine dry lime dust. Two more caverns of great size, and so high that the feeble light of our torches lost itself in seeking to define their limits, led us to a narrow passage where the bottom was covered with a soft white mud, common in such places, and called by the Germans *berg milch* (mountain milk,) and which soon became so deep that it was impossible to proceed further. We returned by the same road, which I should think was about a mile long, having occupied two hours in the cavern.

As for the bones which some travellers speak of as being strewed over the floor of this cave, and from which the peasants have given it the name of the "Dragon's Hole," we could find no traces of them; and I am inclined to agree with those who

think the broken stalactites have been mistaken by the ignorant for bones, and thus given rise to the fiction.

It so happened that while at St. Miklós, accident threw in our way the son of a gentleman at Hradek, Herr v. C——, to whom we had a letter of introduction, which, but for this circumstance, might, like so many others, have remained in my pocket-book and deprived me of the pleasure of a most agreeable acquaintance.

As it was, we were no sooner within sight of the village than a person who had been sent out to meet us, for fear we should have gone to the inn, directed the driver straight to the prefect's house; and, no sooner were we there, than the servants were ordered to unpack the carriage and take the things into our rooms, and this almost before we had determined whether we should stay there or merely call and pass on. This point was, however, at once determined by the frank and hospitable manner of our host,—it is difficult to resist unaffected and sincere kindness of heart.

Our host, after allowing us time to rest ourselves, offered to conduct us over the establishment of Hradek, of which he is the chief director. Hradek is a small village, important only as the centre of the trade in wood belonging to the Kammer (Exchequer,) and entirely inhabited by officers and people in its employment, who are all engaged in the management of the forests, the felling of the timber, and the transportation of the wood to the Danube. In many parts of Hungary, timber is of no value, from the expense of transportation, and that must have been the case here, till Government erected a number of locks in different parts of the Black Waag—as one of the sources of this river is called—by means of which a sufficient body of water is obtained to float down large timber from the mountains to Hradek. A great part of the district through which this river passes is in the possession of private individuals, who enjoy the same advantages of transporting their wood as the Government. For all this wood Hradek forms a depôt.

The manner in which it is brought to this place is curious enough. The woodman who has been employed during the winter in felling, collects his lot of timber at the water's edge in spring, and, binding with bark or thin branches the end of three trees together, he jumps on to this slender raft and pushes off, leaving the other ends loose that they may the more easily accommodate themselves to the rocks and shallows they must pass

over. When he comes to the flood-gates, he strikes his axe firmly into the wood; and, maintaining his place with its aid, he rushes with his slender craft down the fall produced by the opening of the gates, and so pushing here, and guiding there, floats down to Hradek.

Here, to prevent robbery, the wood is examined, authenticated, and marked; then it is laid up till a purchaser is found for it, or Government requires it for public works.

At Hradek, the wood is arranged according to its size, age, and quality, every piece being marked in such a manner, that the man who felled it could at once reclaim it. The whole of the wood from this neighbourhood is pine, and is chiefly used for building-timber. A considerable part is cut up into planks on the spot by very imperfect sawing-mills, which we visited. These mills produce three hundred thousand planks per year, of five yards in length each. The quantity of timber felled annually in the forests belonging to Government in the district of Hradek, amounts to about fifty thousand trunks. The wood is generally fifty years old.

The most approved system of forest management in Hungary, where they have certainly the advantage of abundant experience, is that of laying out a wood in different portions—if large enough, in fifty—and clearing the whole of one portion every year, so as to leave the land fit for replanting the year after. They replant at regular distances from seedlings. Our system of thinning woods is quite unknown. Which plan is the more profitable I know not, but ours has certainly the advantage in beauty, I suspect also in the formation of finer timber, for I have nowhere seen such magnificent trees as in Old England. The net revenue derived by the Exchequer from Hradek does not amount to more than 6,000*l.* per annum.

When the wood is sold, two floats of three trees each are united; and receiving a load of planks above, they are navigated by two men each, with one large oar fixed at either extremity of the raft. In this way they pass as far down the Waag as Rosenberg, where the river becomes wide enough for two such rafts to be united. They now erect a little shelter of planks, and two of the raftmen returning, the other two conduct the double raft through the rapids of the Waag to the wide waters of the Danube, and so on to Pest, or even Semlin.*

* Some of the English ship-builders employed at Pest, spoke of this wood as of a very good quality; but declared, that from a want of a regu-

As we returned from our walk, supper was already prepared. In Hungary, where people dine at one, supper is still the same cheerful meal it used to be with us, and it has always this advantage over the pompous dinner which now takes place nearly at the same hour, that it is free and unceremonious. As far as the composition of it is concerned, I never could distinguish any difference between supper and dinner; it begins with soup, passes through the half-dozen courses considered indispensable, and ends with dessert and liqueur.

Many were the questions our host put to us about England. Bulwer's "England and the English" is known every where, and Pückler Muskaw has helped to spread an acquaintance with our manners. For politics, the *Algemeine Zeitung* is the authority. It is wonderful how eagerly every one asks for information about our Parliament, and I could not help thinking that if some of the honourable members who occasionally make such melancholy exhibitions there, could guess how far and wide their reputation is spread, they would sometimes think twice before they speak. Many seemed to think the House of Commons must needs be the favourite resort of every one, and I have heard young men declare, that they would toil and slave a life long for the pleasure of once seeing, and hearing the debates of that House. Not a single great name in either chamber, but was familiar to our host. How did lord Grey look? What would the Duke of Wellington do? How could Peel hold with the ultra-Tories? Was O'Connell an honest man? Did Stanley really believe all he talked about Church property? And Lord John Russell, "*der musz e' mord Kerl seyn, der geht vorwarts!*" These and a thousand others were the inquiries we had to answer, and some of them, I must confess, puzzled us not a little.

I cannot help comparing the state of things at Hradek and elsewhere in 1836, with the account Dr. Bright gives of his experience in 1814; premising, however, that we visited Hungary after twenty years' peace had made the most distant parts of Europe know and sympathize with each other as inhabitants of the same country, while he visited it after a twenty years' war had torn asunder every tie, and rendered the nearest neighbours ignorant of every thing concerning each other, but that they existed, and were enemies. Dr. Bright states that a mining officer of Kremnitz believed "Mexico was an English island, and

lar business-like method, they could get it cheaper from Vienna than Hradek.

that other clever and agreeable persons could scarcely be convinced that coffee, sugar, and rice, are not the products of Great Britain." Either knowledge must have made most rapid strides, or the Dr. was unfortunate in his acquaintance; for my own part, I should be less surprised to hear what is considered a well-educated Englishman inquire in what part of Peru the gold mines of Kremnitz are situated, than to find even a moderately informed Hungarian ignorant of such facts as those specified. In truth, our ignorance of Hungary is bitterly complained of by the Hungarians: "You are more interested in England about the cause of the South Sea Islands than about us Protestant constitutional Hungarians; you know more of the negroes in the interior of Africa than you do of a nation in the east of Europe." "This is undoubtedly true, but how can we help it?" was my answer. "Neither your newspapers nor those of Germany dare give us any information on your politics; for if they do, they know that their Austrian circulation is lost, as they are stopped at the frontiers, and besides the difficulties of travelling in the country, it is by no means easy to procure a passport at Vienna for that purpose." We both regretted that between two nations who had each so much that the other required, such mutual ignorance should prevail, and we could only hope that steam-navigation would break down the barrier which had hitherto been found insurmountable.

We spent the greater part of the next day at Hradek, and a pretty little place it is, regularly built, with double rows of trees along the street, and a neat grass plat before every house; nor did we leave our hospitable friends without sincere regret—their kindness and attention to us could not be exceeded.

And now, gentle reader, we must take leave of the Waag; for a little above Hradek it is divided into two streams, called the White and Black Waag, both inconsiderable brooks, which take their rise in different parts of the Carpathians, and here unite to form the river we have so long followed. I know not whether I have infused into you any part of the affection I myself feel for this lovely valley, this wild and wilful stream, these blue mountains, and these legendary castles; to me they offered scenes so fresh, so romantic, and so unexpected, that I hardly know now whether I judge soundly of what I saw. But when I turn to H——'s sketch book, I cannot help flattering myself that he fully justifies my passion for the valley of the Waag. Reader, may you be of the same mind!

CHAPTER VI.

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE HUNGARIAN CHAMBERS.

Function of the Diet.—History of the Diet under Maria Theresa—under Joseph II.—his revolutionary Measures opposed and defeated—under Leopold II.—under Francis I.—Gravamina and Preferentialia.—Reform Party.—Diet of 1832.—Urbarial Reforms.—Chamber of Deputies.—Sessio Circularis.—Petition in Favour of Poland.—Deputies' Salaries.—Composition of the Lower Chamber.—County Members.—Delegate System—its Advantages in Hungary—Borough Members.—Members of the Clergy—of Magnates, and of Widows of Magnates.—Business of the Diet.—Proposed Reforms in the Lower Chamber.—Chamber of Magnates.—The Palatine.—Debate.—Ferdinand the First or Fifth?—Trick of the Government.—Character of the Chamber—composed of Prelates, Barons, and Counts of the Kingdom, and Titular Nobles.—Anomalous Position of the Chamber.—Reforms essential to its Independence and Usefulness.

On our return to Presburg from the Waag, the Diet was again assembled, and we were once more launched on the troubled sea of Hungarian politics. To such as are anxious to know something about these matters or of the institutions with which they are connected, this chapter will not be without its interest; but to such as read only to kill time and to escape the trouble of thinking, we recommend to pass it over.

"To maintain the old Magyar constitution," says Fessler,* speaking of the duties and objects of the Hungarian Diet,—"to support it by constitutional laws, and to assert and secure the rights, liberties, and ancient customs of the nation; to frame laws for particular cases; to grant the supplies, and to fix the manner and form of their collection; to provide means for securing the independence of the kingdom, its safety from foreign influence, and deliverance from all enemies; to examine and encourage public undertakings and establishments of general utility; to

* I quote from the "Terra Incognita" of Orosz; a book from which I have derived much instruction, and which I recommend to the English traveller, notwithstanding some things I do not admire, as the best source for acquiring information in regard to the present state of Hungary.

superintend the mint; to confer on foreigners the privileges of nobility, the permission to colonize the country and enjoy the rights of Hungarians, are the important functions of the Hungarian Diet." How far it has performed these noble functions since the period of its establishment, it would occupy us too long to analyze; but some few remarks on the constitutional history of Hungary from the reign of Maria Theresa are necessary to enable us to understand its present position.

All Europe knows how Maria Theresa, when surrounded by enemies, and driven from every other part of her dominions, took refuge in Hungary; and, throwing herself and child on the mercy of a generous people, was received, as every sabre leapt from its scabbard, with the glorious cry "*Vitam et sanguinem pro Rege nostro Maria!*" All know how faithfully this promise was fulfilled, but few are aware with how much danger to the very existence of Hungary the debt of gratitude was repaid.

The fixed idea of this great Queen's reign was the union of all her heterogeneous possessions under the same institutions and the same form of government. In Hungary she directed her efforts to the introduction of the German language, habits, and manners among the people. The Hungarians were told they were a savage race, who must become Germans to become civilized. This project, however, was so well mixed up with others, for the establishment of useful institutions, the improvement of the state of the peasantry, the education of all classes of her subjects, the better ordering of religious societies, the dismissal of the Jesuits from the kingdom, the removal of such barbarisms from the statute-book as the right of sanctuary, the use of the rack, and the frequency of capital punishments, that the more enlightened of the Hungarians became ashamed of their nationality, forgot their native language, threw off the noble costume of their forefathers, and became as German as their Magyar tongues and Eastern blood would allow them. With so much skill were these changes effected, that Maria Theresa was adored by the people, whose constitutional rights she was undermining. During the forty years she reigned, the Diet was only called together thrice!

Fortunately for Hungary, Joseph II. was less politic—as politeness and custom entitle us to call the infraction of the ruler's faith to the people—than his mother. His first act was to refuse the coronation, because he did not intend to rule according to the laws and constitution to which his coronation oath would

have bound him. During his whole reign he never summoned a Diet, but went forward unrestrained by any thing but his own conscience, to work out what he believed to be the happiness of Hungary. Almost all his objects were great and good,—his means of execution almost always bad. Honest almost to a fault, Joseph committed only one error, but it destroyed the labour of his whole life. He made a revolution when only a reform was needed. Had Joseph been a reformer instead of a revolutionist, how much would have been spared both to him and to Hungary!

The king rushed forward in his course of improvement with blind precipitancy; change followed upon change with the quickness of thought—that is, of Joseph's thought—for it was in vain that the best disposed even of the old-fashioned Magyars attempted to keep pace with him. It was his principle that he would himself see the effect of his labours, not leave all the advantage to posterity. How little did he know of human nature, or human institutions!

So really wise and useful were many of the changes he introduced, that for a length of time the bad were borne for the sake of the good. Monasteries were dissolved, and schools and universities were endowed with their funds; religious toleration, if not absolute equality, was granted to the Protestants; hosts of court retainers and pensioners were dismissed; the civil and criminal jurisprudence was reformed; the relation between peasant and noble was placed on a more equitable footing, and taxation was equally distributed. But, with these reforms, came a virtual destruction of the whole political and municipal constitution of Hungary. The sanction of the Diet was wanting; county meetings were forbidden; the election of county officers declared illegal; local courts abolished; and the whole country re-divided into ten districts, to be managed by royal commissioners. Even these measures met with only a passive resistance, till at last Joseph seized upon the sacred crown of St. Stephen,* conveyed

* It is almost impossible for a foreigner to conceive with how deep a veneration the Hungarians regard this crown as an emblem of national sovereignty, and its removal was considered, as indeed it was intended, to be a mark of the reduction of Hungary to the state of an Austrian province. Pope Sylvester II. sent the crown to Stephen, first King of Hungary, in the year 1000, on the establishment of Christianity in the country, whence it has received the title of "Holy and Apostolic Crown." It has at various times been seized by usurpers to the throne, been hidden for years, removed to foreign countries, but always eventually brought back,

it to Vienna, and soon after issued a peremptory edict that all official business should be transacted in Germany.

As one man, the country now rose in opposition; they felt that their existence as a nation was at stake; the moment for the great struggle had arrived, and remonstrances, firm but respectful, were laid at the foot of the throne from every county. At the first appearance of resistance the spirit of absolutism showed itself; strict commands were given that no opposition to the Royal ordinances should be permitted: no means to repress the rising spirit were left untried; dark hints were even whispered of a servile insurrection excited by Royal emissaries,—but all was vain; a Diet was loudly called for, and both soldiers and supplies were refused. At last the King's eyes were opened, alas, too late!—his early death prevented him from fulfilling his declared intention "to follow that path which the common wishes of the nation pointed out as the best." His last act was to annul by one stroke of the pen all that he had been labouring to effect during his life.*

Most of the German historians who have written on this period of Hungarian history have neither understood nor appreciated it. On the one hand they see only barbarism and factious opposition, on the other an enlightened liberality led on by sincere philanthropy. It is certain that both Maria Theresa and Joseph were far in advance of the people whom they governed; but however ignorant the latter may have been on other matters, they had a keen perception, which the habitual exercise of constitutional rights only can confer, of the danger of innovation in the hands of a King who acknowledges no control. They felt that although Hungary might have become greater by obedience, she would have become neither more happy nor more free. Had the Russians opposed Peter the Great with the same firmness the Hungarians did Joseph, Russia might have been at this day preserved from greatness and slavery.

The wise Leopold's too short reign gave rise to the most important Diet Hungary ever knew. After securing, as far as

and more proudly regarded than ever. It is now placed in the castle of Buda; two of the highest nobles of the land are appointed its guardians; and it is watched and guarded with even more care than the holiest of relics. The reign of Joseph II. is, by Hungarians, regarded as a kind of interregnum, because he never placed this crown on his head.

* The only exception was the decree of toleration in favour of the Protestants.

enactments could do, the national independence, and the ancient constitution of the country, as well as ensuring the religious toleration of the Protestants, they formed a standing committee, or rather a deputation of the nation, to inquire into the *gravamina* or grievances of Hungary, with power to review the whole circumstances of the country, and to propose a general and efficient reform.

The stormy events which shook all Europe during the first part of the reign of Francis, prevented, or rather served as an excuse for delaying, the consideration of reforms to more quiet times; and that foolish romantic generosity, of which the Hungarians as a nation cannot divest themselves, kept them quiet during the period when Austria's weakness would have forced her to grant what Austria's strength now enables her to refuse.

After a long interval a Diet was called together in 1825, but effected very little, nor was it till 1830, that they began to consider the report of the *deputatio regnicolaris*, as revised by a second deputation the year before. Of the *gravamina* and *postulata* of the first, fourteen were chosen out as *preferentialia*, and passed both chambers.

These *preferentialia* may be said to contain the essence of the grievances of Hungary. They demand that Dalmatia, Transylvania, Gallicia, and Lodomeria, should be reincorporated with Hungary; that the military frontiers should be placed under the command of the Palatine and governed by Hungarian laws; that the duty on salt should be reduced; that the edicts of government to officers of justice should be discontinued; that the laws respecting the taxes on the clergy should be observed; that the Hungarian Chancery should be made really, not merely nominally, independent of the Austrian Chancery; that the coinage should bear the arms of Hungary, and that the exportation of gold and silver should be prevented; that the paper money should be abolished, and a return made to a metallic currency; that the Hungarian language should be used in all official business; that the fiscal estates—such as have fallen to the Crown on the extinction of the families to whom they were granted—should, as the law directs, be given only as the reward of public services, and not sold, as at present, to the highest bidder; and lastly, that spies should not be employed and trusted by the Austrian Government in Hungary. These, it will be observed, are in fact but so many demands that the laws, as they at present exist, shall be observed, and yet, with one or two very trifling excep-

tions, they have all been met by evasion or delay, so that it was impossible for the nation not to see that the court was determined, if possible, to refuse its requests, and that nothing but fear prevents its honestly saying so.

In the mean time a party had been springing up in Hungary, which, no longer content with merely requiring that the principles of the old constitution should be fairly carried out, desired that important reforms should take place in these institutions. The men who most strenuously opposed the government of former times, did so for the maintenance of their own exclusive privileges; the object of the present opposition was rather to cede privileges which were incompatible with the welfare of Hungary, but, at the same time, to obtain stronger guarantees for the maintenance of their rights as freemen, and gradually to extend those rights to others. They saw their country, in name possessing a free constitution, labouring under all the evils of a tyranny without its small advantages; and they determined, while retaining the freedom bequeathed to them by their ancestors, to disencumber it from the barbarisms by which it was surrounded. The wild schemes of revolution, which turned the heads of all Europe towards the end of the last century, no longer disturbed them, but they saw that a gradual reform was both useful and necessary. The favourite objects of their desires were—after strengthening the nationality of Hungary—freedom of commerce, and an improved commercial code; the navigation of the Danube, and the improvement of internal communication; increased freedom and education of the peasantry; the repeal of laws preventing the free purchase and sale of landed property; perfect equality of all religions and the freedom of the press. For the greater part of these objects they are still struggling.

In 1832, the Diet was again called together, and it was proposed to begin with an inquiry into and a reform of the commercial system; but these, on the plea of the greater urgency of other measures, were cunningly delayed, and the code of laws respecting the peasants—the Urbarium—was considered and disposed of instead. The opposition say, that the object of Government was here again to make itself appear the friend of the peasant, by putting the nobles in the equivocal position of seemingly neglecting the interests of the poor, and thinking only of their own pockets; or by inducing the more ignorant of their body to refuse concessions, which they would no doubt have ceded had a free commercial system been first introduced, and the material

and moral advancement, necessarily consequent on it, been once felt. As it was, some good, though much less than was anticipated, was effected.

The deputation had strongly recommended, the liberal party united all their strength to carry through, and even Government did not deny the justice of a bill for giving to the peasant the unrestricted privilege of buying and selling landed property, and the enjoyment of equal rights before the law; and yet this great measure, one from which Hungary might have dated a new era in her history, was not carried. Eleven times the Commons passed the bill—eleven times the Magnates rejected it. At last a majority of two voices was obtained against it in the Commons—that is, against its immediate consideration; and it was accordingly put off to another Diet. In the course of this Diet, however, the peasants were relieved from the tax for the support of the deputies; it was thought rather too impudent to make the peasant pay twelve shillings a day to a nobleman whose labours had been hitherto chiefly directed to his oppression. This was, however, only a piece of quasi liberalism of the Tories; the Radicals would fain have left it as it was, and founded a claim on it for the peasants to vote for those they paid.*

I find I have been betrayed into the use of English party names, to express the divisions of Hungarian politicians; but it must not be wondered at, for they are as well known, and almost as commonly used in Hungary as in England; and, moreover, they have none of their own by which I can characterize them.

The second time we attended the sittings of the deputies, we were admitted into the body of the chamber, as it was only a *Sessio Circularis*, a kind of committee of the whole house, in which bills are prepared and discussed; in fact, in which all the real business is done. On such occasions, not only the gallery, but the whole chamber is open to every one who chooses to enter, even without uniform. The gallery, as on our former visit, was

* The principal acts of the Diet between this and the dissolution, which took place in the beginning of 1836, were—an act for the introduction of the Hungarian language in all proceedings at law, public acts, and in the transaction of public business; an act for building a bridge at Pest, with power to make the nobles pay toll; an act for obliging the judges to record the reasons of their decisions, and for the publication of these; and a formal resolution of the Diet, praying the King to summon the Diet to meet in future at Pest instead of Presburg.

in part occupied by ladies, while what we should call the floor of the house was crowded with students and young lawyers. This custom of admitting persons unconnected with the business of the chamber, and who are allowed to cheer and express their disapprobation equally with the members themselves, produces considerable confusion, and detracts much from the solemn character of the debates. To change it, however, would create a violent opposition, for every noble claims the right to appear in person at the Diet, and only submits to be represented, because it is more convenient, but without, in the mean time, giving up his right to a direct share in the legislation.

The subject of debate was the presentation of the petition in favour of Poland, praying the King to interfere to prevent the total destruction of that gallant nation. Poland and Hungary had been so long united in the bonds of suffering, their commercial interests were so nearly allied, the similarity of their institutions and long historical associations, had so blended their names, that, in no part of Europe did the Polish revolution meet with more ardent sympathy or more substantial support than in Hungary. The warmest wishes were every where openly expressed in favour of the Poles: volunteers from Hungary flocked to join the standard of liberty, and supplies of money and provisions were sent from every part of the country. Nor did the Hungarians desert their brave neighbours in the hour of need; crowds of refugees found shelter in Hungary; scarcely a nobleman's house in many parts of the country but had two or three of them concealed for months, and even years, from the search of Russian or Austrian agents. Not a county but drew up petitions and remonstrances against the barbarities of the Muscovite conqueror, and a spirit of hatred against Russia took possession of the breasts of the Magyars which that power may one day rue.

The petition, which was in Latin, was expressed in strong language, and drew forth some energetic speaking. It was no debate, however: for the speakers were all on one side, except as to some verbal corrections, which were all carried in favour of the more liberal interpretation.

The next subject was a motion to ask the immediate assent of the King to the bill for obliging the nobles to pay the deputies' salaries, formerly extorted from the peasants, instead of waiting, as is usual, to the end of the Diet. This was opposed by the liberal party as being a dangerous precedent, for some reasons which we could not make out, and was finally lost. Instead of

dividing the house, the president called over the names of the counties, when the deputies rose and declared the tenor of their instructions; sometimes making speeches, sometimes giving a simple assent or dissent. This is the most common time chosen for speaking, though any one is at liberty to address the chamber before the voting begins.

The lower chamber in Hungary is strangely composed,—a mass of anomalies and inconsistencies, such as old constitutions will sometimes present. Old constitutions, however, are not to be despised. They have been formed to satisfy the wants of those who use them, not to fulfil a theory; and, although they may sometimes exhibit inequalities and inconsistencies, from which the work of many hands is rarely free, it should not be forgotten, that they possess the advantage of adapting themselves to changes which would destroy the harmony and solidity of a more regular structure.

The deputies forming the lower chamber are of different classes. First come the deputies of the counties, then those of the towns, and higher clergy, and lastly, those of the magnates or widows of magnates. The deputies of the fifty-two counties are chosen by the people* or constituent body, two for each county, who have, however, only one vote. They are, properly speaking, only delegates sent up to express the will of their constituents on certain questions, for which they are found in lodging, and receive twelve shillings per day. But if they are paid, they are forced to do their duty; one or other must be present at every decision, and neither can absent himself without permission.

The members communicate to the county meeting the motions about to be brought forward; the constituents debate these questions, sometimes during several days; and then, according to the wishes of the majority, instructions are framed for the deputy, as to the manner in which he is to vote. In case the deputy should act contrary to these directions, he is recalled; obliged to explain his conduct; and, if such explanation is not considered satisfactory, he is turned out and another elected. Many questions, of course, arise on which no instructions have been given, and here the deputy has only his own conscience to guide him: but he is obliged immediately to report what he has

* *Populus*, in Hungarian Latin, means the nobles, clergy, and inhabitants of free towns; *plebs*, to which is usually appended "*misera contribuens*" is applied to the peasants only. Of the constituency of Hungary we shall speak more at large in the chapter on the nobles.

done. Notwithstanding all these checks, a deputy has much power and influence, and his recommendation and advice to his constituents have considerable effect in the framing of the instructions he receives.

In some cases where boldness of speech has brought the deputy into trouble, his county has come forward and declared that he only expressed the sentiments of his constituents, and that they were ready to answer for his conduct. In the instance of Balogh, when Government began the process against him, he immediately resigned his seat, and a meeting was called to elect a new member. The Lord Lieutenant came from Vienna with the avowed intention of persuading them to choose some one more agreeable to Government; and it somehow got wind that he had 3000*l*. with him to aid his eloquence. Some of the lower nobles, who are chiefly Protestants, zealous and not too enlightened, were easily induced by the report that Balogh was an enemy to their religion, and perhaps a little influenced also by the judicious distribution of the 3000*l*. aforesaid, to promise their votes against him. By some chance, this plan became known, and the Protestant clergy,—liberals, because oppressed,—at once undeceived their flocks; when, indignant at the deceit practised upon them, they all, to a man, voted for Balogh, and sent him back a stronger oppositionist than ever. So much for bribery in Hungary.

I know the feelings of an Englishman would be very strongly against this delegate system. I can fancy an old-fashioned county member declaring, "that no constituents should bind him hand and foot, and make him vote and speak according to their fancies instead of his own." "All very right, my good sir," an Hungarian might answer, "in your happy and united country, where a free press and a national government secure to the people a knowledge of every thing that passes, and a certainty that the good of the country is always the chief desire of their rulers, however they may differ as to the best means of obtaining it; but where no free press exists, where the interests of the ruling party may be opposed to the national welfare, where some of a small number of deputies, removed very far from their constituents, might possibly yield to the influence of threats or golden arguments, it is not so much amiss to have a strong and positive check upon them."

But I must not forget to mention the members of the royal boroughs, and the anomalous position which they occupy. They

have the right of sitting and speaking in the chamber, but not of voting. Jealous of the nobles, as possessing rights and privileges superior to themselves, and looking up to the Crown as their immediate and natural protector, they have ever been but little more than obsequious instruments in its hands: at least such is the excuse offered by liberal Hungarians for the violent, and apparently unjust proceeding of the other members of the Diet—namely, that of depriving the free towns of the right of vote which they certainly enjoyed at one period.

One vote among all the towns was insultingly offered by the nobles, and scornfully rejected; indeed, we cannot help lamenting that they did not, as they once contemplated, quit in a body the chamber where their presence was a degradation. Many of these places, it is true, are little better than old Sarums, and ill deserve any political privileges; but this alone is a poor reason for disfranchising all the boroughs of the kingdom. Almost all the liberal members declare themselves ready to restore this privilege to the towns when an improved municipal organization shall have freed them from the dictation of the Crown; and, with reference to the population, as soon as a more fair distribution of representative power can be effected. It is an abuse which requires a speedy remedy, for it begets daily a stronger anti-national feeling amongst a population rapidly increasing both in wealth and numbers.

With another class of complainants I have no sympathy whatsoever: these are the representatives of the chapters of cathedrals,—some very reverend and well-fed prebendaries, who sleep away their time in Presburg, instead of in the country. Though still allowed to speak, neither their talent nor information has been such as to secure for them a willing audience, and custom shuts their mouths, except on subjects interesting to their order.

The most ridiculous position of all is occupied by the representatives of absent magnates, and of the widows of magnates. A magnate, who for any good reason is unable to attend the Diet, or a widow who cannot appear in person, have both the power of sending to the lower chamber,—not to the upper, to which they themselves belong,—a delegate, who has no other privileges than those of sitting in the chamber, twisting his mustachios, and crying, "Haljuk! Haljuk! (hear! hear!) when any thing tickles his fancy. The fact is, this deputy is generally some young student of law, or poor dependant, whom business has brought to Presburg, and who thus gets his lodging at the expense of the town.

The right of summoning, proroguing, and dissolving the Diet, as well as fixing the place in which it shall be held, is, of course, a prerogative of the Crown;* but, according to law, it must be called together once at least in every three years, and that too, within the boundaries of Hungary. Almost ever since the Hapsburg family has reigned in Hungary, the Diets have been held in Presburg, on account of its proximity to Vienna; but it is loudly demanded, that in future they should be held in Pest. The Diet does not assemble like our parliament in annual sessions, but remains sitting till all the business is finished, so that a new election takes place for every Diet. In former times, a few weeks or months were generally sufficient to settle the affairs of the nation; but the present Diet has been already sitting for more than three years, and it is not expected to be dissolved for some months to come.

When the King has issued his royal letters calling on the counties and towns to send up their deputies, within six weeks, meetings are immediately called together, and the elections take place. After the chambers have gone through certain ceremonies, and are legally constituted, they send a deputation to the King to invite him to repair to the Diet. On his arrival in Presburg, the members of both chambers wait on him, and receive from his hands the royal propositions—a royal speech, in which are detailed all the measures recommended by the Crown to the consideration of the Diet. The business of the session commences with the debates in the Chamber of Deputies on these propositions, which are adopted or rejected as seems fit. If adopted, they are sent up to the magnates, and if they pass them also, they are presented together with the other acts of the states for the royal approval or rejection in mass at the end of the Diet. Although the royal propositions in theory ought to

* The prerogatives of the King of Hungary are strictly those befitting a limited monarchy. Among the principal are, the granting of nobility—except to foreigners—and all hereditary titles and dignities. The nomination to all high offices in the church and army, and to most of those in the state—the offices of palatine, sheriff, and county magistrate are exceptions. The prerogative of pardon, the right to coin, and other royal privileges. The command of the regular army, the declaring of war or peace, and the intercourse with foreign powers. The King has likewise the direction of public schools and universities, is head of the Protestant Church, and can admit or forbid the reception of the papal bulls. I believe the Crown has likewise the uncontrolled disposal of the public revenues; the Diet votes the amount, but does not control its expenditure.

constitute the sole objects of the labours of the Diet, they often form but a very inconsiderable part of them; for any member on receiving instructions from his constituents has a right to introduce any other measures he chooses under the title of "grievances." When the acts of the Diet have received the royal signature, they are forwarded to the different chief magistrates all over the country, to be registered and published in the counties, towns, and circles under their administration.

The Personal or President of the lower chamber, at the same time chief judge of the Royal Table, is appointed by the Crown, and in the absence of responsible ministers, to a certain extent answers for the Crown.

Among the most important reforms to be made,—or rather disputed questions to be settled,—with respect to the constitution and privileges of the Chamber of Deputies, are the establishment of the right to vote of the deputies of towns, the exclusion of the deputies of Chapters and Magnates, the election of their own President, the presence of responsible ministers, the presentation of a budget, and the publication of their debates.

On our first visit to Presburg, we had neglected to visit the Chamber of Magnates—the Peers of Hungary. When we returned we hastened to supply this omission.

In another part of the same building where we have already seen the assembled Deputies, the Magnates hold their sittings. As we took our places in the small gallery which overlooks the hall, we were struck with the profound silence which seemed to reign over the place. Through the centre of the room runs a long table, at which were seated some thirty persons, many of whom were ecclesiastics—among others, the bishop of the Greek church, with his long white beard,—all in black dresses, giving a solemn appearance to the place, which was broken only by a few gay uniforms of the Hungarian guard. Though plain, however, the Chamber of Magnates is certainly fitted up with more attention to ornament than that of the Deputies.

About one o'clock the Palatine, the Archduke Joseph, uncle to the present King, took his seat at the head of the table as President, and received the deputation of the lower Chamber, which brought up a bill for their consideration. The Archduke is a tall, very thin person, of advanced age, with that peculiar melancholy cast of countenance so characteristic of the reigning family of Austria, and which may be perceived in the old Spanish portraits of their ancestors just as distinctly as in every one of

the family at the present day. No one who has seen Velasquez's portraits of Charles the Second and his mother, could doubt for a moment from what blood the Palatine of Hungary is descended. Though occupying a position of great difficulty, liable to the suspicion of courting popularity on the one hand, and sacrificing the country to the Crown on the other, he has obtained the respect, I believe, of all parties. His knowledge of business and his devoted attention to it, are said to be extraordinary. That he should be an admirer of constitutional independence, or a warm advocate of popular rights, is hardly to be expected from an Archduke of Austria: but that he is a sincere friend of Hungary, and a zealous promoter of what he believes beneficial to her, even his opponents allow.

The bill now brought up from the Deputies, and to which the degree of importance attached by all parties, appeared ridiculous to a stranger, had reference to the appellation of the new King, and was to settle whether he should be addressed as Ferdinand the First, or Ferdinand the Fifth. The matter, however, was not so unimportant as it may appear; the fact is, he is Emperor Ferdinand the first of Austria, and King Ferdinand the Fifth of Hungary; and unless Hungary had ceased to be an independent country, which the greatest courtier would not dare to insinuate, there could be no question as to his proper title. The Magnates, however, thought otherwise: it was understood, that the Court desired that the style of Ferdinand the First should be used, and the Magnates were too anxious to please not to desire the same thing. The Deputies had now for the fourth time sent up this same bill, insisting on the title of Ferdinand the Fifth, and for the fourth time the Magnates were now about to reject it. Two or three short speeches were made in Latin, the Palatine seemed to sum up the evidence in the same language, and the question was declared decided.

As we afterwards heard, it was in vain the court party exhausted their breath and servility in favour of what they supposed the Court would wish. At the moment when the Magnates were as firm as rocks on the wrong side, the Court took the wise course of showing its contempt for such supporters, by sending down a proclamation:—"We, Ferdinand the Fifth, by the grace of God, King of Hungary, &c. &c."—adopting of its own accord what it knew to be right, and perceived to be the general wish, leaving the odium of having opposed it to its blind satellites. The Court is accused of often playing such tricks:

and why should it not? It has surely a right to use as it pleases men whose want of moral independence makes them exist only in its smiles.

Quiet as were the meetings of the Deputies, the Magnates far exceeded them in this quality; a dead silence seemed to weigh upon their deliberations: not a cheer, not a plaudit, was heard; and, as a young Radical observed, when he heard me remarking the circumstance, "not a sentiment that deserves one." Of the two or three Liberal members who were present, no one spoke; and not a word of Hungarian, therefore, was heard, for the Court party adhere most religiously to Latin. This is said to be in compliment to the Palatine, who once attempted to speak Hungarian, but only got laughed at for his politeness,—the Hungarians are as intolerant of a foreigner's blunders in their language as John Bull himself. But I suspect the Magnates have a still better reason for not speaking Hungarian, than mere courtesy; and that is, simply, because they cannot. So completely has a great part of the higher nobility been denationalized, that they know almost any language of Europe better than that of their native country.

Of the six or seven hundred nobles who have a right to take their seats in this Chamber, only thirty were present; the rest—some thinking it better to leave such matters to Government, some fearing the expense of a residence in town, some egotistically contenting themselves that they could do no good—stay at home, and let things take their course. Others again, not less egotists, proclaim in loud voices their contempt for the whole constitution; declare that nothing but revolution can improve the system, nothing but republican liberty benefit the state; while, in the mean time, they are content to smoke their pipes, and flog their peasants to prepare for the great change. As in England, the Upper Chamber here is considered the representative of the stationary system; and, in a country where the existing evils cry so loudly for reform, it may be supposed that it has not the voice of the country with it. In the commencement of the present session, a strong Liberal party assembled for the purpose of outvoting the churchmen in favour of a proposal for granting increased liberty to the Protestants, but it was carried against them; and, since then, they seem to have left the Chamber entirely. I doubt if, among the whole of the titled nobles of Hungary, a Tory majority would be found to exist; but so many are absent, that the very few Liberals who remain in the Chamber are totally powerless.

The position at present occupied by the Chamber of Magnates is one surrounded with doubts and difficulties on every side; its rights and constitution are every day a matter of question. It may be said to be composed of three classes of members: first, the higher Clergy; second, the Barons and Counts of the kingdom (Magnates by office;) and third, the Magnates by birth and title.

Thirty-five bishops and archbishops of the Catholic Church, and one Greek bishop, have seats in the Chamber of Magnates. Of the thirty-five Catholic bishops, sixteen are only titular bishops; their sees being in Turkey.

The Catholic prelacy of Hungary is commonly said to form a very wealthy, very bigoted, and not very learned body.* In the Diet, they are not only the most strenuous advocates of Protestant exclusion, but are stanch opponents of any reformation in education, or any extension of liberty to the lower classes. It is said that one of them offered a young Magnate, whose youthful follies had placed him in pecuniary difficulties—though it had not corrupted his integrity—to pay all his debts if he would speak against the Protestants on an approaching debate: the answer was one of the cleverest speeches in their favour made during the whole session.

The Archbishop of Gran—the Prince primate as he is entitled—is possessed of wealth and power beyond all example; and, in some things, little below that of royalty itself. Among other remains of a former state of society, is the right enjoyed by the Archbishop of conferring a kind of nobility, which is hereditary, and enjoys nearly the same privileges as that conferred by the Crown. A tenure of service was formerly attached to this right; and it was commonly only given to such as distinguished themselves in war under the guidance of their lord—alike a spiritual and carnal warrior. It is now many years since the clergy ceased to do military service for their lands: but they hold just as fast as ever to the lands themselves, as well as to all the power and

* This may appear a very sweeping and harsh judgment, and I am quite willing to allow that there are many and striking exceptions. I have had the pleasure of meeting members of the Catholic clergy, from the bishop to the parish-priest, who would have been an honour to any country, any religion, and any profession; but the fact stands recorded in history, that the Catholic clergy in the reign of Leopold solemnly protested against that monarch's ratification of the Toleration edict of his predecessor, and all I have heard of their conduct during the present Diet tends to prove how little they have changed.

influence they confer; nay, I doubt if they would not prefer to buckle on the shield, and place a lance in the rest, rather than forfeit their places at the Diet as Magnates of Hungary, or lose their seigneurial rights as lords of the soil.

The second class—the *Barones et comites Regni*, as they are called—is headed by the Nádor or Palatine, the highest, and one of the most ancient dignities of the kingdom. For the office of Palatine the King nominates four persons, of whom I believe two must be Protestants; and from these the Diet—that is, the two Chambers in common—elects one. Since the reign of Maria Theresa, the Palatine has always been chosen from the royal family; but so strong a feeling exists of the inconvenience of this, that it is scarcely probable it will occur again. The exact duties of the Palatine are very difficult to define. He is commonly called a mediator between the King and the people; and it is in this character he is often invited to present petitions. When the nobles appear in arms, he is their natural chief. He is president of the Chamber of Magnates, and of the highest court of justice, the *Septemviral Table.* As *Locum-tenens et Palatinus Regni*, he is likewise President of the Vice-regal Council, which does, or ought to possess the executive power in Hungary; but, of this, more anon.

The other Barons and Counts of the kingdom are the great officers of state, and the lords lieutenant of counties. The first are fourteen in number; and, with the exception of the two guardians of the Crown, who are chosen like the Palatine, they are all nominated by the King. The latter are fifty-two in number, and are likewise named by the Crown, except in a few cases where the office has become hereditary in certain families.

The third class—called Regalists, because summoned individually by royal letters—is composed of every titled Prince, Count, and Baron who has arrived at the age of twenty-five years; and, as the title in Hungary descends to all the sons alike, they have all an equal right to a seat in the Upper Chamber.

There is considerable obscurity as to the origin and rights of the Chamber of Magnates. It is certain that at one time the Two Chambers sat together,* and even yet, when they cannot

* According to Klein, the Two Chambers were not formally separated till the Diet held in 1562 under Ferdinand I., the first monarch of the line of Hapsburg. It is extraordinary that Engel says nothing of this, though he enters at considerable length into the history of that Diet. Tradition attributes the separation to the accidental circumstance of the chamber

agree, they sometimes come together in what is called a mixed sitting (*sessio mixta,*) and decide by acclamation. This, however, has been less resorted to of late than formerly. Since a more compact opposition has been formed among the Deputies, the Magnates would be in the minority; and the mixed sittings, formerly the resource of the Court when in difficulty, are discontinued.

The Upper Chamber has at present no power of bringing forward any measure, nor I believe even of proposing amendments on those sent up from below; the power of veto, or approval, is all that is granted to it: but this it uses most liberally, for, in the present session, the same question has been rejected eleven times, after as many approvals by the Deputies. But the most extraordinary anomaly is the undecided privileges of some of their own body. It is questioned whether the nobles deriving their seats from their titles only, have an equal right to vote with those deriving their seats from their offices and estates. In consequence of this, the Palatine, on some occasions, is said to have decided against the absolute majority: *vota non numerantur, sed ponderantur*, was declared to be the principle; and it was for him to hold the scales.

As it seems to be now a pretty well established opinion, even in the most democratic constitutions, that a second Chamber of a more independent character than the elected one is necessary to curb the first ebullitions of popular feeling, and to give solidity and consistence to a mixed constitution, perhaps the best thing the Hungarians can do is to make their Chamber of Magnates a really efficient and powerful body. The first points to be settled would be, the absolute power of the majority; the equality of rights among all the members; the determination of the manner of voting; and the extension of the privilege of the initiative in all questions not concerning finance.

If it were desired to effect a still more efficient reform, a fair balance of power might probably be maintained by leaving to the King the nomination of the bishops (if it were thought expedient to retain them,) the great officers of the Crown, and the lords lieutenant; and by granting to the Magnates by title, in lieu of seats in the Chamber, the right of electing from among

where they met being too small to hold them both; and lays the scene, I think, at Œdenburg. It is probable that it had often been practised before it was formally introduced.

themselves a number of representative peers for life, equal in number to those nominated by the King. Such a body, alike independent of the arbitrary will of the Crown, or the changing passions of the mass,—powerful from its wealth, and respectable from its talent and knowledge of business,—would soon assume a position which might effectually enable it both to check the inroads of the Crown on the rights of the nation, and shield the throne from attacks on the part of the people.

CHAPTER VII.

DANUBE FROM PRESBURG TO PEST.

Departure from Presburg.—The Danube.—Regulation of its Course.—Mills.—The Islands Great and Little Schütt.—Raab.—Komorn.—Neszmély and its Wine.—Gran.—Crusaders and Turks.—The Dinner.—Contrast with a Voyage on the Danube before the Introduction of Steam.—Miserable Boats.— Company.—Journey.—Spitz.—Sleeping Accommodations.—The Toilette.—Wissegrád, and Wissegrádi Clara.—Beautiful Scenery.—Waitzen.—Approach to Pest.

LONG before the sun had well warmed this lower earth, we were summoned from our beds, to prepare for the Danube (or Duna, as it is called in Hungarian) steam-boat, which started from Presburg precisely at five o'clock. A sunrise may be a very delightful thing, and I have almost enjoyed it when stern necessity obliged me to be moving at such a time; but I do most solemnly protest against the imputation of ever having risen voluntarily at so unseemly an hour for so absurd a purpose. To a sunset commend me if you will; there you have glorious colours, and feelings congenial to them,—all the brilliancy of golden lights and purple shadows, all the poetry of warmth, the luxury of shade, and the still sweetness of reposing nature: but in the morning the poor sun itself looks no better than a huge Seville orange; and the raw air, and cold dead smell of night, together with the gray tints of surrounding objects, make one shiver at such mockery of life and heat. I would just as soon get up to see the house-maid make my study-fire, as worship the god of day till he has fairly warmed the air, and made it fit for mortal breathing.

Not so apparently the *Kaiserliche-Königliche-Oestreichische-privilegirte-Donau-Dampfschifffarht Gesellschaft* (Imperial Royal Austrian privileged Danube Steam-boat Conveyance Company,)—I wish they had a more euphonious name!—and, in obedience to their strict rules and regulations, we were before five o'clock, opposite the Königsberg, and descending the little moveable pier into the steam-boat. In spite of the early hour,

a crowd was collected to watch its departure,—friends anxious to say the last kind words to those about to leave them. Nor were we, strangers though we were, without some hearty shakes of the hand from men we had never seen before we entered that place, but of whom we shall retain a most kindly recollection for years to come.

The cries of the captain in foreign English, "Back her!" "Ease her!" "Let her go!" warned us that we were already off; and, almost before we could look round, we were in the middle of the Danube:—another moment, and Presburg was running away from us:—yet another, and nothing but the castle could be seen, peering over the thick woods which come down to the water's edge on either side. For many miles no object of interest meets the traveller's expectant eye: the country all round is flat and sandy, sometimes wooded, sometimes spread out in rich meadows, looking every where as if it had at one period formed the bed of the river itself, which, even now, frequently changes its course. The immense arms, which the Danube in this part sends off at every half-mile or less, are many of them wider than the parent stream itself, if that term can be applied to any part of it; for it is often uncertain which course the steersman should prefer, the height of the water, and the appearance of the stream, guiding him in his choice. This, and a very undulating course, are the natural effects of the flatness of its bed; and it is to remedy these defects that the commissioners for the regulation of the Danube direct their chief efforts.*

We passed some well-constructed embankments, erected at a great expense, a little below Presburg; one of the largest cost 8,000*l*. By this means the force of the current is turned in a particular direction, and made to act on a fixed point with such power, that in a wonderfully short time it cuts out passages, brings down banks, straightens the course, and slits up whole arms, which would otherwise consume the water, and often lead to a change of the bed of the river itself. One of the greatest difficulties of the navigation at present, arises from the sharp turns the steersman is often obliged to make to avoid the sand-banks, which the force of the stream, diminished by the immense expanse over which the water spreads, is not sufficient to remove of itself. By means of these embankments, however, it is cal-

* Baron Putton is the commissioner for this part of the Danube; and, next to Count Széchenyi, he is the person to whom Hungary is most indebted for the success of steam navigation.

culated that in a very few years, the course of the river will be straightened, its bed deepened, and the navigation rendered practicable at all seasons. At the period of our voyage the water was low; and we could perceive, by the constant attention and watchful looks of the captain, that he was by no means certain that he might not strike a sand-bank, where it was very possible we might have had to remain twelve hours without being able to get off again.

In the first few miles we passed, I think, some hundred water-mills. They are but rude structures, though they seem to answer tolerably well the purposes for which they are intended. They are composed of two deck-boats, containing the mill-works, with a clumsy wheel between them, which is moved by the force of the current. They are generally in rows of eight or ten fastened together at a short distance from the bank. In winter they are drawn up high and dry ashore.

The islands, Great and Little Schütt, formed by two arms of the Danube to the north and south of the main stream, occupy either bank for more than fifty miles of its course. The stranger is surprised to hear that these islands form one of the most fruitful districts in the whole country,—They were formerly called "The Golden Gardens;" for he scarcely sees a single village throughout the whole of the route. Nevertheless, they are well peopled; but the sudden overflows to which the Danube is subject have driven the inhabitants to some distance from its banks, where they may be found congregated in large and flourishing villages.

Just above Gönyö, the southern arm, forming the Little Schütt, rejoins the Danube; and at some distance off may be observed the spires of Raab, standing forth from the sandy plain so fatal to the arms of Hungary. It was before this place that the undisciplined squadrons composed of the nobles of Hungary were dispersed, almost without an effort, by the well-trained legions of Napoleon; and, with them, the last hopes of Austria to resist the imperious commands of France.

The first place of any importance on the banks of the Danube, between Presburg and Pest, is Komorn, situated at the junction of the Danube and Waag, or rather the Danube and its northern branch, which receives the Waag. Defended on two sides by the Danube and the Waag, and enclosed by strong walls, Komorn boasts the honour of being a virgin fortress, in testimony of which it bears a small statue of a maiden on its walls. Soon after pass-

ing Komorn, the flat is agreeably broken by a low range of hills, following the north branch of the river for a considerable distance, and celebrated for the excellence of their wines. Neszmély, a small and insignificant village, grows the most esteemed. The Neszmüller is one of the highest-flavoured as well as most costly wines of Hungary.

The hill of Gran, opposite the embouchure of the river of the same name, now comes in sight; on which is situated the half-finished cathedral and residence of Archbishop Rudnay. This church was begun in 1821; and, after an expenditure of an immense sum of money, still remains unfinished for want of funds. It is difficult to form any opinion from so passing a view as that we could obtain from the steamboat, but I doubt if it will equal the expectations the Hungarians have formed of it.

Gran, the birth-place of St. Stephen, the patron saint of Hungary, is the seat of the Prince-primate, and perhaps the richest see in Europe; its revenues place those of Durham and Canterbury, even in their best days, completely in the shade.* It is difficult to ascertain their exact amount, but common rumour generally estimates them at 100,000*l.* per annum, though some reduce them to eighty or even sixty thousand.

Gran is memorable in the history of the crusades as having witnessed the friendly meeting of Frederick Barbarossa and Bela, King of Hungary. The German Emperor was received with all due honours by his brother monarch; whole magazines and stores were presented to him, to aid his expedition; and Bela even accompanied him to the mouth of the Save, to protect him from attacks on the part of his subjects.

When the power of the Moslems had extended into Europe, Gran was for a long time an advanced post of their armies in Hungary; and its fall before Sobiesky was justly looked upon as

* The Catholic priesthood in general are wealthy, at least in comparison with their Protestant brethren, though not exorbitantly so, and probably not more so than their habits of charity and hospitality require. The whole body of Catholic clergy, according to Schwartner, amounts to 9027; of Catholic souls, to nearly 5,000,000; so that there is about one priest to every five hundred souls. The lowest payment of a priest is 300 f. c. m. or 30*l.*, and is generally much more; besides which, he enjoys fees for sacraments, and a certain measure of corn from every married pair. He has also thirty or forty acres of land, a house, and the right to a certain quantity of firewood, cut and carried free of expense. This salary is chiefly derived from tithe; but in some cases I believe it is paid by the landlord, and in others by Government. The greater part of the priesthood is derived from among the lesser citizens and peasants.

the first step towards their total expulsion from this country. It was in the subsequent campaign, in which Waitzen, Wissegrád, and Buda were taken by the Duke of Loraine, that Eugene, then a volunteer in the army, first learned those lessons in war which afterwards enabled him to humble two of the mightiest powers in Europe—Turkey and France.

A few minutes sufficed to put on shore some passengers at Gran, for whom a rude boat rowed by still ruder boatmen was despatched from the town on a signal being given from the steamboat, and in a few minutes we were again under weigh. As I saw the long tables laid out along both sides of the deck, and a merry party of not less than a hundred persons sit down to a comfortable dinner, as well served as was possible on such an occasion, I could not help contrasting our present position, and its well-ordered society, with a voyage on the Danube before the introduction of steamboats, and the strange incidents and odd companions to which it introduced the traveller.

It was but three years before this time that I found myself at Linz, on the upper Danube, with a firm determination not to proceed to Vienna by any other means than the river. It required nothing less than such a determination to enable me to persevere, against the advice of every one I consulted on the subject. There were no regular boats even for the conveyance of goods, still less of passengers, between Linz and Vienna, at that time; and I was told I must wait till some of the Bavarian boats came down, in which, as they generally stopped an hour or two at Linz, I might be enabled to take my passage. The second morning, a boat was announced at the quay, and in half an hour the landlord of the inn had packed me up a basket of provisions for two days, and a good store of wine, for he assured me I should get nothing but Bavarian beer in the boat; and without further inquiry I hastened down and got on board.

As soon as I had time to look about me, I found myself in as old a specimen of naval architecture,—as singular a malformation of planks and poles as ever was put together: a Norfolk coaster would have taken it for a floating sheep-pen: or, if we may believe popular illustrations of Scripture history, such was the ark which Noah constructed for himself and his family in the days of the Flood. This *Kehlhammer*,—as this kind of boat is called, from Kehl, where they are built,—is a narrow flat-bottomed vessel of about one hundred and twenty feet long, and bearing more than one hundred tons' burden. On the sides of the vessel

are raised walls of planks about six feet high, covered in with a slanting roof, forming a long house, which, with the exception of a few yards at the bows and stern, occupies the whole boat.

The *élite* of the passengers were collected on the few yards at the head, and under a small portion of the roof spared for their accommodation, the rest of the covered part being filled up with goods; while the roof was occupied by the *ignobile vulgus*,—some score *Handwerksburschen* who had received a free passage on condition of helping to row the boat. From the head as well as from the stern protruded an oar of at least thirty feet long, to serve both the one and the other, as a rudder,—for it is quite immaterial which end goes first,—and from the sides four others of like dimensions, for the propulsion of the boat. These oars, which take four or five men to work each of them, were pulled by the *Handwerksburschen*, who laughed, sung, and begged with all the light-heartedness and impudence so peculiar to their order. We of the quarter-deck consisted of two Austrian civil officers, wearing a little silver image of the double-headed eagle in their caps, with short meerschaums peeping from their pockets, and embroidered tobacco-bags—the birth-day presents of some fair friends—hanging from their buttons, and possessed of all the characteristic slowness and *bonhomie* of their country united to all the fancied dignity of office; a young artist from Munich, returning with his dusty knapsack and worn-out shoes from a foot journey through the Tyrol; a fat burger of the little town of Molk, with his gay and pretty niece; and one or two others, without sufficient interest to have fixed themselves on my memory.

In less time than I have taken to recount it, the stream had borne us into the middle of the thick white waters of the Danube; the *Handwerksburschen* sung as they plashed the long heavy oars into the water; and, in a few minutes, the green hills and white towers of Linz were passing from our view.

Sometimes urged on by the united efforts of the rowers, sometimes floating listlessly down the stream, we passed the whole of that day; and night-fall found us near the town of Spitz. We had no protection from a burning sun, and no seat even, save the rough planks of the rude deck. The day was however pleasantly occupied in admiring the noble scenery of the Danube, making love to the fat burger's pretty niece in bad German, and listening to the good-natured nonsense of the Austrian *employés*. The only variety was, when our united prog-baskets were emptied to

form a very sorry dinner; when the Strudel and Wirbel,--the Scylla and Charybdis of the Upper Danube,—threatened our frail bark with ruin; or when a few minutes' delay beneath the proudly crowned heights of Mölk restored to her walls the burger and his niece.

The night, however, had no such charms to make up for its inconveniences. As we came to anchor at the miserable little town of Spitz, the boat emptied the whole of its remaining crew into the one poor public-house of the place. The *Handwerksburschen* and boatmen secured the large drinking-room, where they rolled themselves on some straw, and sung, drank, and smoked till morning. After some hours' waiting we obtained an apology for a supper, which was washed down by the Spitz wine, notorious only for the excellent vinegar it makes, and, to judge from its sourness, very little making it would require. My Austrian friends had kindly bespoken a bed for me, so that all care on that subject was off my shoulders; but, when the time arrived, I was a little astonished to find that they and the Bavarian were to join me in the occupation of a small room with precisely space for four beds, the ends of which almost touched each other. The beds themselves were boxes filled with straw; over which were laid a mattress and one dirty sheet, and on this a heap of pillows and a down bed, in dark cotton covers. It was intended, untravelled reader, that we should lie on the sheet, but under the bed; for here they use only one sheet, and employ the featherbed as a substitute for coverlet and blankets. Some of our companions were even less fortunate. A lady and her nephew occupied a little room on one side, and four or five stout fellows a still less one on the other. Of course, undressing was out of the question; and though we did manage to get through the few hours remaining,—what with smoking our pipes, laughing at our difficulties, and listening to the songs of the *Handwerksburschen* below,—we were not sorry when they roused us at three to say the boat was ready to start.

If our dormitory arrangements had been rather questionable, those for the toilette were to me quite incomprehensible. One pint decanter of water, a glass, and a pie-dish-looking basin, with a long narrow shred of cloth meant for a towel, were the only preparations visible for the ablutions of four persons. I modestly waited to see how the others would proceed: one of my friends of the double-headed eagle commenced. He poured out a glass of water, of which he took a large draught; and after using it as

most men do, in washing their mouths, he deliberately squirted it into his joined hands, and so applied it to his face! Several applications of the same kind, and a little dry-rubbing with a corner of the long shred, completed the washing of hands, face, and mouth. In mute astonishment I watched all these three nasty individuals go through their unclean ceremonies, ere I fully comprehended that they really thought they were washing themselves! As for the rest of their doings, Rabelais has described them in the history of the great Gargantua: "Après se pignoyt du pigne Alemaing, cestoyt des quatre doigtz et le pouce: car ses precepteurs disoyent que soy aultrement pigner, lauer, et nettoyer, estoyt perdre temps en ce monde." Anxious as I was to conform myself to the habits of the country in which I was, and unwilling as I might be to incur the accusation of English superciliousness, I need scarcely say that even my powers of endurance were exhausted. Captain B. Hall may object to a pump in the open air, but there are times when such a resource is invaluable! Thanks to Count Széchenyi and the company with the long name, a man may now travel from one end of the Danube to the other, and wash himself almost like a gentleman every morning.

After leaving Gran the scene undergoes a delightful change: instead of the flat plain to which the eye had been accustomed, fine mountains rise on either side, green and precipitous, from the water's edge. The captain, who had never before for a moment quitted his station on the paddle-box, now sat at his ease as unconcerned as any of his passengers: a child might have steered the vessel, so deep and regular was the stream. As we were admiring the varied landscapes which the bends of the river successively brought in view, a new turn introduced us to the scattered ruins of Wissegrád. On the very summit of the hill are the remains of the stronghold of the race of Arpád,—the keep, as it were, of the fortress; while halfway down between this and the little village on the banks of the Danube are the more elegant towers of the castle which Mathias Corvinus converted into what was called in that day "an earthly paradise."

No spot in Hungary has witnessed more of the tragedies of history than Wissegrád. The prison of two of Hungary's kings, and the death-place of several others,—now selected from its strength to the dangerous honour of the guardianship of the sacred crown, now a prey to the destroying ravages of the Ottoman,—there is still a story of poetic horrors located here, so

far exceeding all the others as to have acquired for its heroine the popular appellation of Wissegrádi Clára.

It was in the first years of the fourteenth century that Carl Robert, King of Naples, was placed on the Hungarian throne by the intrigues of Pope Boniface the Eighth, who, on the failure of the race of 'Arpád, declared the kingdom a fief of Rome, and arrogated to himself the right of nomination to the crown. Exhausted by civil wars, the Hungarians unwillingly yielded so far as to choose the Italian king for their monarch; but they paid dearly for their weakness. Carl Robert delighted to introduce into his new kingdom the shows and entertainments common to the more refined courts of Europe. We read at this period of frequent tilts and tournaments within the walls of Wissegrád, and of royal entertainments in which four thousand loaves of bread and two thousand bottles of wine were consumed every day for a fortnight. But with this pomp and luxury came a looseness of morals,—the common fruit of a meretricious civilization engrafted on barbarism,—of which the rude but simple Hungarians had no previous idea; the excesses of the new king and his court were a scandal to the whole land.

Following the licentious example of Carl Robert, his brother-in-law, Casimir, King of Poland, then on a visit at Wissegrád, forced from Clára Felizian, a lady of the court of surpassing beauty, and virtuous as she was beautiful, favours denied to his prayers. In this infamy he is said to have been aided by the queen, whom jealousy of her husband's admiration of the maid had probably driven to this crime. The moment Clara could escape from her enemies, she hastened to demand the protection of her father, Felizian von Zach, an old and attached officer of the king. No sooner did the poor old man receive the piteous complaints of his darling child, than, maddened with rage at the shame put upon his family, he sped to Wissegrád, and, unannounced, gained entrance to the castle. The king and queen were seated at table with their two children, when, sabre in hand, the injured father rushed upon them, and striking at every thing in his way, he wounded the king, and cut off four fingers from the queen's hand before the attendants could destroy him.

If the revenge was bloody and unjust in its object, what can be said for the horrid cruelties by which Carl Robert satiated his rage? The innocent cause of this tragedy was seized, and suffered the mutilation of her hands, nose, and lips; and in this condition was led through different cities, to the cry of "So

perish the enemies of the king!" Her body, and that of her young brother, were then bound to horses' tails, and finally thrown to the dogs. Even the most distant relations of this unhappy family, who could have taken no possible part in the affair, were seized and executed, "in order that the whole of the race of traitors might be extinguished." From this time, say historians, the arms of Carl Robert were no longer attended with their wonted success.

After a few more miles of beautiful mountain scenery, the country becomes more open, the domes and towers of Waitzen come into view, and the Danube, changing its course, makes a sudden turn to the south, and hastens on to the capital of Hungary. On the west the mountains, though at some distance from the river, now run parallel with it, and form a beautiful feature in the landscape; while to the east extends that vast plain which occupies so great a part of this country.

It was a fine summer's evening as we approached the end of our journey, and I shall never forget my astonishment at the picture I then saw. The mountains, which had receded from the river, seemed again to approach its very edge; for some distance they were covered with vineyards almost to the top, but, as we approached Buda, these yielded to buildings which appeared to us a succession of magnificent palaces. As we drew still nearer, the beautiful Elizabeth Island, with its fresh groves and sloping banks, formed a lovely foreground; while, beyond, were ranged on the one side the palace and fortifications of Buda, terminating in the bold and rocky Blocksberg, and on the other lay the splendid structures which line the quay of modern Pest. Whether it was surprise at the unexpected magnificence and extent of the capital, whether the light of the setting sun imparted some magic beauty to them, or whether it was our imaginations that fairly ran away with us, I know not; but with one assent we declared we had never seen a more magnificent sight than that presented by our first view of Buda-Pest.

A salute from the steamer, returned from the shore, soon announced to all expectant friends and empty fiacres that it was time to hasten to the packet-pier; and, before we came alongside, the bank was covered with a crowd of persons interested in the steamboat or her occupants.

Among some half-dozen of persons who seemed privileged to come on board without waiting the conclusion of the preliminary arrangements, our attention was immediately directed towards

one in particular by the deference paid to him both by the passengers and crew, and the respect with which every one seemed to regard him. He was a short and rather dark-complexioned man, with a singularly bright eye, and dressed in a style so completely English, that, but for the moustache, I should have supposed him a countryman. Every eye was on him, every one was anxious to greet him as he passed; while his own composed features and compressed mouth told he was a man who knew he was observed, and had to act a conspicuous part in the drama of life.

It was the Count Széchenyi, who had come to inquire of the captain how he had got over the sand-banks, and what was the actual state of the navigation. But we must give him a new chapter.

CHAPTER VIII.

COUNT SZECHENYI ISTVAN.

Count Széchenyi, an Officer of Hussars, a Traveller, a Reformer.—Improvement in the Breed of Horses.—Races.—Magyar Language.—Széchenyi's Writings—the "Credit"—his Judgment on England—Character of his Writings.—Establishment of Casino.—Bridge over the Danube.—Nobles taxed.—Steam Navigation.—Political Career.—Prudence.—M. Tasner.

COUNT SZECHENYI ISTVAN* is the third son of the founder and benefactor of the Museum of Pest, a scion of the same house which produced two of the most distinguished archbishops of Hungary. For seventeen years Széchenyi served in the Austrian army; and it was not till the peace had rendered it an idle life, and removed all chance of distinction, that he determined to quit it. Perhaps, disgusted with the system of favouritism or the personal enmity which had kept him down to the rank of captain; perhaps moved by that spirit of regeneration, which, from the mountains of Transylvania spread over the plains of Hungary, and was felt even at the gates of Vienna itself; or, it may be, warned that the freedom with which he had dared, under the influence of this spirit, in his place as an Hungarian magnate, to address the upper chamber, was inconsistent with the uniform he wore;—such have been suggested among the causes which may have driven him from the army, and which soon placed him in the foremost rank of Hungarian patriots.

The leisure which he now enjoyed was occupied in foreign travel. England particularly fixed his notice. Our manners, our institutions, our commerce were objects of his study, and offered him useful hints for the improvement of his native land.

The causes which impeded the introduction of commerce in Hungary, and the great development of her natural resources which must result from their removal, first occupied his attention,

* In Hungarian, the Christian-name is placed after the surname, as in Natural History the name of the species follows that of the genus.

At home, he found a government and people mutually distrustful. The Hungarians complained to him that foreign—so they called Austrian—jealousy and oppression were the sole causes of all their misfortunes; while, beyond the Carpathians, he heard his countrymen described as a tyrannical, ignorant, and turbulent nobility, the oppressors of a poor, idle, and slavish peasantry;—the one class who would not, the other who could not effect any thing for the common advantage of their country. On all sides, a reform in Hungary was declared impossible.

Széchenyi was not to be turned from his object. His plan was cautiously laid down, and has been so far steadily followed up,—to labour incessantly at improvements, and to pursue such only as the strength of his means gave him a reasonable hope that with unwearied perseverance he might carry through. In common with others, he has always striven for the great objects of reform in the laws and institutions of the country, an extension of the rights of the lower classes, and a more equitable and just government; but his great and peculiar glory is in the path which he has marked out alone, and which, in spite of all obstacles, he still follows, with the greatest success,—namely, the improvement of the material condition of Hungary.

One of the first objects to which Széchenyi drew the attention of his countrymen was the improvement of the breed of horses; a subject particularly suited to their taste, and likely to attract their notice. A large stud, often from one to two hundred horses, forms almost a necessary part of a nobleman's establishment; and yet they rarely bred any thing but a cross of the common country horse with the large, slow, high-actioned Spanish horse, a race of little use but for the pomp of ceremony. Széchenyi introduced the English race-horse and hunter, and, to show their superiority, he instituted races and kept a pack of hounds; in short, he succeeded in making English horses a fashion, which is now generally followed.

The races take place twice a year,—at Pest about the end of May, and in autumn at Parendorf near Presburg—and are so well attended, that it is evident they suit the taste of the people, and it is highly probable that they will one day form a part of the national amusements.

An improvement in the breed of horses was an object well worthy Széchenyi's attention, and nothing was more likely to promote it than the establishment of races at the capital; but some have thought that objects of a deeper interest than the encourage-

ment of thorough-breds might have been dreamed of in their institution. The Diet ought by law to sit every three years; but, when the government is strong, it sometimes dispenses with its services, as it did during and after the last war for twenty-five years; and then the nobles have no object of common interest to bring them together. When minds clash not with minds, they are apt to grow rusty and lose somewhat of their sharpness and polish; a thousand useful ideas and beneficial projects, a thousand high resolves and patriotic schemes, expire untried, unheard of, from want of opportunity to communicate them to others. This opportunity to meet and communicate the races afford, without a pretext for interference or interruption. Many come they know not why; the master-minds command, and they obey.

The system so long and so ably followed up, of Germanizing Hungary, had succeeded to such a degree as to destroy to a considerable extent the feelings of nationality among the higher nobles: most of them were ignorant of the language; few of them took any interest in the affairs of Hungary, except in the preservation of their own privileges; and some even affected to despise their countrymen, because of a little outward rudeness, of which the absenteeism pursued by the more polished and wealthy was the main cause. Fortunately the well-wishers of Hungary knew how influential a principle the spirit of nationality is in the regeneration of a country; nor did they forget how strongly the language of one's childhood, with which man's earliest and dearest associations are connected, acts in exciting that spirit.

The restoration of the Hungarian language was therefore the first object. Széchenyi himself, from disuse, was no longer master of it: he made himself so, and became one of the most influential in its diffusion. He was the first in the Chamber of Magnates who spoke in Hungarian; till then Latin was always used in the debates, as, we have seen, it still is by the Palatine and by the court party. Few thought of reading Hungarian, still fewer, except some poets, of writing in it; Széchenyi published several political works in the language, and Hungarian authorship has become fashionable. Among men it is now the medium of conversation; at public dinners, toasts and speeches in German would not be listened to; and at Pest, whatever may be the case at Vienna, Hungarian gentlemen are now ashamed to be thought ignorant of the Hungarian language.

The establishment of a society for the development of the

Hungarian language was proposed by Széchenyi in the Diet, and was as usual met by innumerable objections, of which the want of funds was the most cogent. "I willingly contribute one year's income," (6000*l.*) said Széchenyi; "I second it with 4000*l.*" said Count Károlyi György; the example was catching, and 30,000*l.* were soon subscribed.

I have some hesitation in speaking of the writings of Count Széchenyi, for I have never been able to master the difficulties of the language; and we all know that translations, even the best, convey but indifferently the spirit of the original. Many of his works too, have not been translated, of these I can only give the title-page. It would be, however, too great an omission not to speak of what has produced so great an effect; and I shall therefore give a short analysis (from the German translation) of his "Hitel," or "Credit," the work which has been most extensively read, and which has gained him the most fame.

The "Hitel" is an inquiry into the causes of the want of commercial credit in Hungary, with suggestions for their removal. In the introduction, Count Széchenyi attacks one of the great drawbacks on Hungarian progress,—the want of a common purpose, and a common opinion. "All are anxious to build," he writes, "and every one at the same building; but unfortunately each wishes to lay his foundation stone in a different spot, and begin his work in a different style. Many would like to commence in the middle, and some seem to think the best plan of building a house is to begin with the roof. Few set themselves to work at the foundation. 'Oh! if the Ludovica road in Croatia were but toll-free!' says one.—'Give me rather a suspension-bridge between Buda and Pest!' answers another.—'First of all, let us lay out a promenade along the banks of the Danube, and plant it with trees; and while they are growing up, we shall have time to—' 'No, no; I say, a Magyar theatre, and the Magyar language, that will keep up our nationality!'—'Ah!' says another, 'if our rich magnates would only come and live at home, instead of spending all their money in foreign lands, and take a part in our county meetings!'—'Tut, man!' grumbles a neighbour, 'that's all nothing; if they would not bring those nasty foreign fashions into the country,—those shoes and stockings, instead of stout Magyar boots,—and those great hairy—how do they call them?—*coliers Grecs*, in which they hide their honest Magyar faces!'—'The paper money is our ruin, friend!' observes one; 'if we could only get hold of Krem-

nitz ducats and keep Hungarian gold and silver within the boundaries of Hungary; then—' 'Nay,' answers a second, 'but the salt-tax! if the salt-tax was but lower!' and so on to the end of the chapter. Every man believes his own plan so much the best and wisest, that, without it, no step can be made in the march of Hungarian improvement.

Others, again, he adds, lay all the blame on Government; others lament that Hungary's glory is past, and mourn the olden time. To all he answers, "Seek what is practical, depend on yourselves for your reform, and keep well in mind that the star of Hungary's glory has yet to shine."

Széchenyi next tries to persuade them that inquiry into their state will show them that their country is capable of much more than is at present supposed; enlisting even the laziest in his cause by the lightness and familiarity of his illustrations. He then begins the more formal part of his work, by proving that the Hungarian land-owner is poorer than he ought to be, from the quantity and quality of his possessions; and that he does not possess those comforts which his circumstances ought to afford him. He next shows that the Hungarian proprietor cannot, at the present moment, cultivate his land to the greatest advantage, because there is no mutual understanding among Hungarians, no commercial credit; while the common holdings of land, the monopolies, and limitation of prices, the loss occasioned by compulsory labour, and the collection of rent in the form of tithe, all tend to impede improvements in agriculture.

From this Széchenyi goes to the subject of commerce, and the causes assigned for its low state in Hungary are examined: the geographical position of the country, the want of capital, the inability to compete with other countries, and the amount and uncertainty of duties on exportation,—and, he might have added, with more force, on importation,—are illustrated with a facility peculiar to our author. The immediate causes of the want of commercial credit he considers to be the excess of regulations, the deficiency of productions, the defective state of communication, the expense and uncertainty of the existing means of transport, and the absence of that strict commercial probity without which an extensive traffic can scarcely exist.

The means by which this credit is to be obtained Széchenyi points out; and contends especially for the establishment of laws for the more certain and easy recovery of debts, and enforcement of contracts: and he combats most forcibly the arguments

brought against this on the score of the dangers of extensive commercial speculations, the unconstitutional spirit of laws delivering over the noble into the power of his creditor, the ruin and downfall of old families, which it is thought must be the consequence of them, and such other reasons as an Englishman may hear any day from a certain quarter of the House of Lords in a debate on the usury laws. Here, as well indeed as throughout the whole work, the prejudices and follies, the ignorance and false pride of the Hungarians, Széchenyi has most severely lashed.

The example of England is frequently held up for imitation, and to the common objections cast against it Széchenyi gives an answer which shows how well he appreciates and understands the best part of our institutions.

"It is impossible," he observes, "to have visited England, and to have seen the vast progress which free institutions have enabled her to make, whether in material improvements, or in protecting the holiest rights of humanity, and not pity those miserable creatures who traduce so great a nation. England has faults as well as virtues; for, earnestly as men may strive after perfection, and far as they may advance in its path, they are not doomed to reach the goal. But there are men who have no soul for what is good, and great, and beautiful; they ever seek, and find nothing but the filthy and the bad; they are the unclean birds of society, and rejoice only in its carrion. Of such are the slanderers of Britain. They seek only the dark side, and they find it dark enough no doubt; but from the light they turn away. There is much that is bad in England, from which God defend us! Above all, her 'intolerance' is always the first charge of her enemies: and that reproach we may make against her with a clear conscience! for among ourselves, thank God! no trace of it exists.—Then, 'the misery of her manufacturers' is brought forward; and it means that they cannot, perhaps, every day eat beef and drink beer, to which they are accustomed, and which, if deprived of, they grumble at. With us, more men live without meat than with it; many Wallacks never taste even a bit of good bread their lives long; and in the neighbourhood of D—— there are hundreds who live through the summer on nothing better than water-melons. But, perhaps, you exclaim, How happy they are never to have known any thing better!—enviable fellows, certainly!—'Then Ireland!* What do you say to Ire-

* "Before this work was finished, Ireland was reinstated in her natural rights."

land?' Alas! it is too true; and we may well wonder how the English can be guilty of depriving so large a portion of their fellow-countrymen of their common rights: indeed, it is almost as bad as if in any other country they were to impose on the poor peasant all the burdens of the state without allowing him any share in ruling it, while a few thousand families enjoyed all the privileges, and all the wealth, and lived like lazy drones on the fat of the land. Nothing could be worse than that!—'The National Debt!' There, indeed, we are more fortunate: of national debt—not very oppressive to individuals after all—we have none; but we have a precious quantity of personal debts, and by these we are crushed to the very earth. But are not such objections absurd? Is it not, fairly considered, seeing the mote in our neighbour's eyes, and passing over the beam in our own?"

If the "Hitel" were put into the hands of a mere political economist, he would find it, perhaps, diffuse, superficial, and crowded with proofs of what he might imagine no one was ignorant; but to one acquainted with the country and the people for whom it was written, the book assumes a very different character. He is astonished with how much delicacy the best parts of the Hungarian character are seized and worked upon; how such prejudices as impede the progress of improvement are ridiculed and exposed; with what a richness and familiarity of illustration principles are taught, so that persons even to whom such discussions are quite new must still be struck with them; and with how much skill the author has managed, in a treatise on political economy, to throw out hints to his countrymen on almost every subject, moral, economical, and political, which the actual circumstances of the country render important. The great lesson which Széchenyi constantly endeavours to impress upon his readers is, that the reforms necessary in Hungary depend on the will of the Hungarians,—that they have only to bestir themselves to effect a complete change in the moral and material aspect of their country.

The first reception of the "Hitel" was any thing but encouraging; the satire was ill relished by those against whom it was directed; its author was abused, written against, and in one instance the work itself was burnt by the common hangman by order of a county meeting. Such was the state of feeling in 1830. In 1835, Count Széchenyi was receiving addresses of thanks from almost every part of the country; in Transylvania a magnificent gold pen was voted him at a public meeting, as the

most useful of Hungarian authors; and every where his name had become a watchword among the well-wishers of Hungary.

Among the later works of Count Széchenyi, are the "Világ" (Light,) an answer to a pamphlet published by Count Desewffy against the "Hitel;" and a work on the Practicability, &c. of a permanent Bridge at Pest.*

Of the style, of course, I speak only from hearsay, when I pronounce it among the best in the Magyar language. To the accusation of coining and introducing new words every one must be liable who speaks of ideas new to the people, and uses names foreign to the country. Some persons complained that they had turned over their Magyar dictionaries in vain for the word "Macadamize," which they very innocently conceived to be a creation of Széchenyi's.

In Hungary, a want of unity between the different ranks of the nobility, an absence of a common feeling, and of something like a general opinion, have been long among the most acknowledged causes of inaction. Every class discusses apart the subjects

* I subjoin a complete list of Count Széchenyi's works, given me by a friend in Hungary:—

"Lovakrul" (On Horses,) Pest, 1828. This work compares the state of horse-breeding in Hungary and England, and suggests plans for its improvement in the former.—A German translation by Vojdisck was published at Leipzig in 1829; and a second in the same language, by Paziazi, at Pest in 1830. It was also translated into Danish by Collin, and published at Copenhagen in 1835.

"Hitel" (Credit,) Pest, 1830.—German translation by Vojdisck, Leipzig, 1831; and again by Paziazi, Pest, 1831.

"Világ" (Light,) Pest, 1831. This is partly an answer to Count Desewffy's "Taglalat," and partly a more complete illustration of the subjects treated in the "Hitel."—German translation by Paziazi, Pest, 1831.

"Magyar Iátékszinrul" (On the Hungarian Stage,) Pest, 1832.

"Buda-Pesti Allóhid" (on the Buda-Pest permanent bridge,) Pest, 1833.—German translation by Paziazi, Presburg, 1833. This pamphlet was published in common with Count Andrásy György, and contains a report of a journey they had made to England to obtain the opinions of our best engineers as to the possibility of a permanent bridge over the Danube; and is addressed to a company formed to carry this object into execution.

"Stadium," Leipzig, 1833. This work, which contains a further development of the principles of the "Hitel" and "Világ," was not published at Pest, from some objections on the part of the Austrian censor.

Several articles on the Danube Steam Navigation, published in 1834, and the following years, in the Hungarian Journal, the "Társalkodo," were afterwards collected and translated by Paziazi, forming one volume, published at Buda, 1836.

of immediate interest, forms its own opinion of public events, and its own plans for public reforms: the accordance which gives strength and force to action is wanting. This deficiency was universally acknowledged; but without a free press, and with a Diet sitting but rarely, and then at a distance from the capital and centre of the country, without reports of the debates, without even a national literature, and in the midst of the bitterest jealousies of caste and class, what remedy could be proposed? Széchenyi had seen the clubs in London; and with that singular talent, which he eminently possesses, of appropriating and adapting whatever he finds good in other countries to the wants and deficiencies of Hungary, he at once perceived how useful their organization might be made, to effect a greater purpose than that of serving as mere pride-protectors for poor gentlemen, or of furnishing the selfish enjoyment of the greatest luxury at the cheapest rate. A club, or—to avoid a name associated on the Continent with certain reminiscences of the French revolution—a Casino, while entirely free from any political scheme, would afford to all the upper classes an opportunity of meeting, and becoming better acquainted with each other's good qualities; it would harmonize and generalize opinions, and improve the manners and the tone of feeling, besides affording opportunities for reading all the journals of Europe, an advantage which few private individuals could command.

At Pest, accordingly, a Casino was established on a most magnificent scale, as we shall see hereafter; and now no less than one hundred exist in different parts of Hungary and Transylvania.

One of Széchenyi's favourite plans is the embellishment and aggrandizement of Pest. For this purpose he has laboured to have the Casino on so handsome a scale; to build a national Magyar theatre; and, more than all, to raise a permanent bridge between Pest and Buda. At present there is only a bridge of boats between the two towns, which is taken up during six months in the year; and the whole communication during that period is carried on by means of ferry-boats, or over the ice. At certain times, particularly during the freeze and thaw, not to speak of storms and fogs, this produces much inconvenience, and is often attended with great danger.

To remove so great a drawback to the prosperity of the two cities, Széchenyi has proposed to build a bridge across the river, either of stone or iron, as may appear best; and, as the width

is only a quarter of a mile, it would not appear so difficult an undertaking. Of course, it was declared impossible; one said the Danube was too wide, another found it too deep, and a third declared, if the bridge was all finished, the first winter's ice would carry it away. English as well as German engineers have thought otherwise; and it is a certain fact, that Trajan's Bridge, three hundred miles lower down, stood firm enough till Hadrian destroyed it.

These, however, were not the greatest impediments to be overcome. Count Széchenyi had a still greater object in view than the improvement of Pest in the building of this bridge; he proposed to teach the Hungarian nobles the advantage of paying taxes. The bridge was to be built by money raised in shares; the interest on which was to be paid by tolls, to which every one, noble or ignoble, should contribute. What! an Hungarian noble pay taxes? A hornets' nest is a feeble comparison to the buzz these gentlemen raised about Széchenyi's ears. It was no matter: he inveighed against them at the Diet, he wrote at them in the journals, he ridiculed them in private, and in the end he conquered them; a bill passed both Chambers, by which the legal taxation of the nobles in the form of a bridge-toll was acknowledged.* The Judex Curiæ shed tears on the occasion, and de-

* I am indebted to the kindness of W. Tierney Clark, Esq., to whom the construction of this great work has been intrusted, as well for the accurate measurements of the bridge, as for a beautiful drawing of it, and the projected improvements on the Buda side of the river.

The piers will be built with granite and marble.

	English Feet.
The distance from centre to centre of the towers	700
Width of the clear water-way	661
Ditto of the side openings	271 each
Total water-way at the ordinary level of the water .	1203
Width of the road-way	25
Each footpath	6
Height of the underside of the platform above the ordinary level	43
Total length of platform suspended	1227
Ditto height of the tower, above the ordinary level of the water	117
Total width of the river at the ordinary level of the water	1408

Baron Sinna, a wealthy and enterprising banker of Vienna, has undertaken to provide the necessary funds for the bridge—estimated at half a million sterling—on condition of enjoying the revenues for ninety-seven years; at the conclusion of which period the bridge is to be given up to the country free of all expense, and, it is said, 100,000*l.* with it, the interest of which is probably intended to keep it in repair. It will be completed in seven or eight years.

clared "he would never pass that ill-fated bridge, from the erection of which he should date the downfall of Hungarian nobility."

Of the petty opposition which Count Széchenyi had to contend with, and of the means by which he overcame it, I cannot speak here. I did not believe that any man possessed the indefatigable energy and perseverance necessary for the task; it requires a truly patriotic spirit to endure those miserable checks which arise from the selfish and interested meanness of the very persons one is labouring to benefit. The corporation of Pest did not think they were justified in giving up the tolls which the present wooden bridge brought them in; the proprietors of land would not sell for such a purpose; the owners of houses here, feared the new bridge would be there, because they knew it would be better there; the very toll-keepers had their friends and supporters, whose opposition, at times, made even a Széchenyi doubt of success.

One of the greatest of Széchenyi's achievements is the steam navigation of the Danube. This is his own in idea and in accomplishment. It is now about six years since he first undertook the voyage from Pest to the Black Sea. A comfortable decked boat, a good cook, and a pleasant companion, with the means and appurtenances for shooting, fishing, sketching, and rowing, were not bad preparations against the fatigues and dangers to which he expected to be exposed. The comparative ease and safety of the navigation, the magnificence of the scenery, the size and importance of the tributary streams which poured their waters into the Danube, and the richness of the country on its banks, were secrets revealed to a mind which felt their full force, and happily knew how to employ them. Of course, the timid set him down as mad for undertaking such a journey; but when he returned, and ventured to whisper the possibility of steam navigation, even his best friends shook their heads. "Steam in Hungary! yes, indeed, in another century!" said those who never think the present the time for action. "Steam, indeed, in the shallows and rapids of the Danube! No; if we must have steam, why not take the plains? Nature has laid them out for railroads," said others, who oppose every thing practicable by proposing something impracticable. Széchenyi let the first wait their time: to the second he recommended a speedy commencement of the rail-road, that the country might derive advantage from one, if not from both of their schemes.

In pursuance of his own plan, Széchenyi went over again to

England; studied carefully the principles of steam navigation; brought over English engineers; and, when at last certain of the practicability of the scheme, formed a company, and purchased a steam-boat. It was in October 1830 that the first steam-boat plied between Semlin and Pest; the communication is now complete from Vienna, and will soon be so from Ratisbon to Smyrna. Thirteen vessels are employed, and a number more are building.

To detail the advantages of this undertaking in extending commerce, in developing the resources of the country, or in opening the road to civilization by the spread of intelligence, were only to narrate what every one knows steam navigation has effected, and will effect, wherever it is introduced; but in Hungary it has done more, it has engaged one of the proudest and richest aristocracies of Europe in a profitable commercial speculation! We shall show elsewhere that it is to the exclusive privileges of this aristocracy that Hungary must impute, in a great degree, her want of commerce: how great a point has thus been gained may therefore be easily understood.

At first, some of those whose hearts were better than their heads—and Hungary possesses a great number of that class—would not hear of profitable speculation: "If it would benefit their father-land, no other consideration was required; it would be degrading so noble an object to mix it up with such tradesman-like calculations." Széchenyi thought otherwise; and he felt assured that a profitable patriotism was the one by far the most likely to endure.

Count Széchenyi's first object was to make the undertaking answer as a commercial speculation. This is a favourite theme in his writings, the constant test by which he examines a new scheme,—I mean if of a nature to which it can properly be applied, for no one knows better how to sacrifice all pecuniary interest when necessary. He never recommends a thing till he knows that interest will back him; and he can then clink his full purse in his opponents' face, and laugh them out of their prejudices. Of all he has done for Hungary, I know of nothing more useful than these demonstrations of the co-existence and often necessary connexion of public and private interest.

During the earlier part of the last Diet, a strong opposition was formed in the Upper Chamber, chiefly under the guidance of Széchenyi, which contained many of the most wealthy and talented of the rising generation. From their moderation, their union, and their knowledge of business, this party, though small

in numbers, was acquiring so great an influence that all the power of the Court was employed to break it up. The Transylvania magnates* were called away by the opening of their own Diet. Those in Government employ were hastily recalled to their bureaux; this man received a place or a pension; another desired a decoration, and hung dishonour at his button-hole; and if a third was too high for such poor bribery, he was recommended to travel, and accepted a passport to convey him from the sphere of his duty. Szêchenyi, though deserted, was more difficult to dispose of, but that "every man has his price" is always the belief of an immoral government; and they found the means of drawing the patriot from the fulfilment of perhaps the higher duty, by offering him a much more arduous one. Szêchenyi was made sole commissioner for improving the navigation of the Lower Danube; and, almost before the ink was well dried on his commission, a thousand men were at work, current-dams were constructed, canals were cut, roads were laid out, rocks were blown up, and the very Iron Gates themselves were threatened with destruction. Széchenyi kept to his maxim—to leave the uncertain and follow the sure and practicable; and I recommend those who so loudly condemn his choice to go to Orsova and see the result.

Since this time, though very far from having neglected his political duties, Count Széchenyi has taken a less active part in politics than was expected of him. Perhaps disgusted and alarmed at the violence of the less prudent; perhaps fearing that an active personal opposition, while it effected nothing, might impede much material good; perhaps confiding in the good intentions of Government, or, it may be, reposing merely till a more favourable opportunity arises of urging on the Diet measures of justice to the peasant, and of encouragement to commerce, it is certain, from whatever cause, that he has withdrawn himself in some degree from active opposition.

Looking at the whole tenor of Count Széchenyi's public life, we feel convinced that he has not acted without reflection, and probably not without good reason, in withdrawing from the political arena for a time; but he must not forget how much Hungary, how much Europe expects of him. When a man has once embarked on the stream of public life, he has no longer a right to disappoint the just expectations of the world. When such a

* A Transylvania magnate enjoys the rights of a Hungarian also if he hold property in Hungary, which many of them do.

man fails, the honest confidence, the high resolves, the purest aspirations of millions are sacrificed. One feels a sickening at the heart, a contempt for virtue, a hatred of one's kind, when the man we have worshipped as the idol of our hopes deceives us in the expectations we have formed of him.

The Hungarians, however, need not entertain such fears: whatever may be the difference in opinion as to the means, no one can doubt the rectitude of Széchenyi's object. It cannot be denied that the support of high moral principles, the unflinching advocacy of just rights, and the unyielding defence of the injured and oppressed, are yet more important to the well-being of mankind than the mere improvement of their material existence; but few in the Hungarian Diet have fulfilled these duties better than Széchenyi, while the other objects at which he has so industriously laboured, the detractors of his fame have entirely neglected.

Those who read Széchenyi's works, and know the reception which they met with,—who are acquainted with the excessive national susceptibility of the Hungarians, and who recollect how just, and therefore how bitter, was the satire he directed against them,—will not suspect him of seeking popularity, except so far as it is necessary to the furtherance of his objects.

That Széchenyi has not attempted what he could not do, and what others have failed in doing, when they did attempt, is, both at home and abroad, no uncommon subject of complaint against him. To me it appears one of his greatest merits. To have known his own powers, to have calculated accurately how far his means would enable him to go, to have reflected deeply on the practicability as well as the utility of a scheme before he proposed it for adoption, would seem just those qualities which best entitle a man to the confidence of a nation; and which, when united to high talents, necessarily make him the leader of a party. But Széchenyi's objects and hopes are best described by himself in concluding the "Hitel."

"The contents of my work will prove to all that I hate all extreme measures, all excesses; that I am a friend of moderation and harmony. Gladly would I see parties unite; and much more willingly would I attain, by a middle path, the *possible good,* than vainly strive after that imaginary bliss, which we may probably never know but in a better world. I cannot, like many of my countrymen, please myself with contemplating what is past; I must look forward. It troubles me but little to know what we once were; but it is of vital interest to me to know

what with time we might, and what we probably shall, become. The past is beyond our control; the future is still within our grasp. Away, then, with fruitless reminiscences! it is time that we bestir ourselves, and open a more glorious future to our father-land. Many contend that Hungary has been; I love to think she yet will be."

It would be difficult, as it would be unjust, to conclude this notice of Count Széchenyi, without mentioning Mr. Tasner. This gentleman, educated for the bar, has accepted the office of assistant and secretary to Count Széchenyi; and the Count only does him due credit when he calls him his right hand. There are few strangers who visit Hungary, who are not indebted to Mr. Tasner for many polite services, who are not aware of the extent and accuracy of his information, and of the kindness with which he imparts it. It is no niggard praise to say that Mr. Tasner, in the less ambitious sphere he occupies, is not less unwearied in application, not less zealous in his exertions, not less devoted to the cause which he believes most certain to work out the good of Hungary, than Count Széchenyi himself.

CHAPTER IX.

BUDA-PEST.

Drive round the Town.—Fiacres.—New Bridge.—Casino.—Redoubt.—Quays and Streets.—Sand-storms.—Increase of Pest.—Museum.—Learned Society.—Meyer Höfe.—Neugebäude.—Plain of Rákos.—Ancient Diets.—Modern Reviews.—Races.—Shop Signs.—Bridge of Boats.—Tolls.—Rowing.—Elizabeth Island.—Buda.—Public Buildings.—Royal Statthalterei.—Austrian Policy.—Fortress.—Turks in Hungary.—Turkish Remains.—Environs of Buda.—Love for the Picturesque.—Gödölö.—Bureaucracy.—Blocksberg.

I HAVE not the least inclination to play the part of a cicerone in Pest, by giving a very particular account of all its churches and public buildings; and still less that of an ill-natured spy, by retailing all the stories, true or false, I may have heard of the owners of the splendid mansions now looking so empty and desolate: still I believe I must say something as to the whereabouts of the place, more especially as it was only this spring that a learned countryman of ours, whom spleen or the fidgets had driven so far from his usual haunts about Westminster Hall, declared with open eyes and gaping mouth that he had discovered Pest! Here was a city, Buda-Pest, of more than one hundred thousand inhabitants, of which this learned gentleman was, up to the time of his visit, entirely ignorant. To guard you, reader, from a similar error, I invite you to take a seat beside me in the fiacre, accompany me in my first drive round the town, and listen to the information I can pick up of it.

Of course we start from the Palatine Hotel in the Waitzner Gasse, because it is one of the best of its kind in the whole Austrian dominions; and therefore the one at which you and I shall remain during our stay in Pest, reader. And, first of all, please to notice the fiacre: none of the dirty, heavy, shabby, slow coaches, found on the stands of London; but a very clean, smart, open calèche, with two high-bred little horses which whisk along at a famous rate; and the driver as far superior in sharpness and wit to his wooden-shod confrère of Paris as the equipage is to

that of London. In winter, instead of the open calèche, a neat close chariot takes its place, for he is a very poor fiacre in Pest who has not a winter and a summer carriage.

Let us drive to the Quay. Observe those first three or four houses, and tell me if you know any private buildings on a more splendid scale, or built in a better style; some of them cost not less than 40,000*l*. They are inhabited by many families, living, as is common every where on the Continent, under the same roof. It is opposite these buildings that it is intended to erect the new bridge across the Danube.

Next we come to the Casino, a handsome building with an exceedingly elegant portico,—a little spoiled, perhaps, by being glazed,—and, as a kind friend has placed our names on the books, we will even introduce you there too. The rooms of the Casino occupy the whole first floor. As you enter, a number of well-dressed footmen are standing about; one takes your hat, and another ushers you into the billiard-room, round the sides of which are rows of pigeon-holes, each bearing the name of a member, arranged in alphabetical order, where letters, cards, or parcels are placed to attract his eye on entering. Beyond this, on one side, are two reading-rooms and a library; and, on the other, two or three drawing-rooms. On the reading-room table we were delighted to find that vagabond Englishman's consolation, Galignani; besides the Athenæum, Edinburgh, Quarterly, and Foreign Quarterly Reviews. In the centre is a very fine ball-room, where the Casino gives three or four balls every winter; and beyond this, again, is a long suite of supper-rooms. A dining-room, and a pretty good cook, complete the arrangements of one of the best managed clubs in Europe.

The stranger, however, is rather astonished at the smell of tobacco, which pervades the whole establishment; and still more by the array of pipes presented in each room, all ready filled, with lights constantly burning beside them. Whether reading, talking, or playing, scarcely a man is to be seen without a pipe in his mouth. It must be recollected, however, that Hungary is not far from Turkey, that the tobacco is excellent, and that smoking is deprived of more than half its disgusting character when unaccompanied by drinking and spitting, neither of which have more to do with it in this part of the world, than a demure face with a clear conscience in some others.

The liberality with which the Casino is opened to strangers, contrasts strongly with the narrow principles on which most of

our clubs are conducted in England. Nothing can be more mortifying to an Englishman than to receive favours which he knows he cannot repay in his own country; and nothing can astonish, not to say disgust, a foreigner more than to find that he is not admitted into a society, of which his friend is a member, without a previous ballot,—nay, that if he calls on him at his club, he may have to stand in the hall among the servants till his friend is summoned out to see him. It has surprised me that none of our clubs have opened a correspondence with some of the best Continental Casinos, and agreed to receive their members during their residence in London, on condition of their own being admitted on the same terms abroad. How far English stiffness might unbend in favour of the foreigner in London, and tend to make the club a pleasant resort, I know not; but it would certainly give the English traveller abroad the means of forming a more general acquaintance with men of his own age and class than any letters of introduction could possibly secure for him; and the foreigner, if he derived from it no other advantage, would at least be able to get his dinner without being subjected to the exorbitant charges of an hotel-keeper, or running the danger of misjudging English habits from the scenes of a common chop-house.

As we drove along the Quay, which is here paved and walled in, we arrived at the Redouten Saal, a ball-room of very large dimensions and elegant proportions, gay in winter with happy crowds of nobles and citizens mingled together in the levelling waltz and gallopade.

The whole extent of the Quay is about an English mile, from which the city extends in a semicircle; most of the streets are wide, all of them paved, and some of them furnished with footpaths. The houses are of white stone, and, generally speaking, much handsomer than those we are accustomed to see at home. Most of the squares are very well built, but, from want of some object in the centre, look bare and deserted, besides giving ample room for the accumulation of those heaps of sand with which Pest is infested. This sand is one of the miseries of Pest; it is so fine that it enters into every thing, destroys furniture, and blinds and chokes the inhabitants worse than a London fog. A sandstorm is something dreadful here. The country round Pest is a sandy plain,—there are few trees or gardens in the outskirts of the place, nothing to break the force of the wind; so that, when it once gathers into a storm, it marches forward, drawn on by the

current of the Danube, and traverses the wide streets of Pest almost without opposition. One sultry day, as I was writing at the hotel, I found the sky suddenly clouded; and, on looking out to see the cause, I felt the air hot and dry; and observed at the end of the long street, which runs parallel with the Danube, a vast cloud of sand advancing slowly forward, attended with a hissing noise as it passed on. A slamming of windows on every side announced that all my neighbours were providing against the enemy; and I had just time to shut mine before it swept by. For five minutes a dense mass of moving sand filled the whole street. In spite of all precautions, however, I found my books and papers covered with a very fine dust, which had entered by the crevices of the window-frames. It has been suggested that this might probably be prevented by plantations of trees round the outskirts of the town.

The growth of Pest within the last few years has been so enormous, that more than half the present town looks as if built but yesterday; at the present time there are ninety houses building, in many of which several families will reside. One of the large squares now in the middle of Pest was, only a few years ago, so far out of the town, that the first occupants could not sleep for the croaking of frogs in the neighbouring marshes. The then neighbouring marshes are now handsome streets.

On turning towards the centre of the town, the Museum was pointed out to us, which was founded in 1802 by Count Francis Széchenyi, with a magnificent donation of books and coins. It contains a fine library, rich in Hungarian MSS.; a complete collection of coins of the Hungarian Kings, from St. Stephen to the present day; a collection of minerals, which is particularly remarkable for fine specimens of the ores found in Hungary; a few fossils, ill-arranged; and a variety of antiquities, specimens of manufactures, &c., &c. Many of these collections deserve better treatment than they at present receive. It is, however, intended to erect a new building, where it is to be hoped the imperfections of the present arrangement will be remedied.

From the Museum we passed to the Hall of the *Tudományos Társaság*, the Academy of Sciences of Hungary. The first object of this society was the development of the Magyar language, and its first name implied simply that meaning; but it seems to be intended at present to give it the place of directress of science in general, and I think wisely. The funded income amounts to about 2,000*l*. sterling. The society has already published, be-

sides its annual volume of transactions, which is got up in very good style, a dictionary of Hungarian and German; and one of German and Hungarian is also in progress. Prizes for the best works published in the course of the year in the Magyar language are distributed at the annual meetings. It is just that the language and literature of the country should occupy the first place in the attention of the members; but it is to be hoped they will soon be able to dedicate some of their time to matters which may *unite* them to the learned of the rest of Europe, as much as their present studies tend to *separate* them. In natural history, Hungary possesses vast unexplored treasures, of which Hungarians are bound to give some account; at present, this subject is sadly neglected from want of union, though a great many naturalists are scattered in different parts of the country. In history and antiquities, too, a fine field is open before them; I do not mean, in absurd antiquarian discussions as to whether Adam spoke Magyar, or Homer was a Sclavack,—both matters, however, which have undergone profound discussion here,—but in the collection of materials for Dacian, Pannonian, and Magyar history, and in the preservation of the innumerable family records with which the private archives abound; among many of which are journals and letters which might one day throw light on obscure parts of the history of Hungary.

As we directed our fiacre to drive to the outside of the town, he took us through some wide streets with houses of only one story, many of which have large courts, with stables, cow-houses, and other farm buildings attached: these are the *Meyer Höfe*, or farm-yards of the nobles, who pass the winter in Pest, and keep here their cows and horses, as well as provender for them, which they send up in considerable quantities from their estates for winter consumption in town. The absence of trade, or, what the Hungarians call "the want of money," makes it more profitable to bring their own productions, even from very great distances, than to purchase on the spot.

As we came to the outskirts of Pest, we perceived a huge stone building of many parts, which we were told was the *Neugebaüde*, or *Josephinisches Institut*. This building was begun under Joseph the Second, for what purpose is said to be a mystery, and has been only lately completed. It is now destined, or at least the Hungarians hope so, to contain a national military academy for the training of the Hungarian nobility to do good service in the field.

We had no sooner passed the gate than we were fairly launched on the great plain which surrounds Pest, and which bears the name of *Rákos Mezö*, or Field of Rákos. It is celebrated in the annals of Hungarian history as the scene of many of those wild Diets, where all the nobility used to assemble in council, armed and mounted as for war, and where, to say the truth, war —and among themselves too—was not unfrequently the termination of their discussions. The first of these Diets* which took place on the 5th of August, 1298, ought to be dear to the recollection of the Hungarians; for it was the first in which the lower nobles—the gentry of Hungary—took a part; the era, in fact, from which the present political constitution may be said to date. It had its origin in a cunning trick of an ambitious but patriotic churchman, the Archbishop of Kalocsa; who, discontented with the influence exercised by the great barons of the kingdom, persuaded the King to call together the whole body of the nobles, whose numbers were sufficient to overawe the powerful oligarchy which opposed him. Many important resolutions, in which the interests of the King, the lesser nobles, and more especially the clergy, were well cared for, and by which the barons were restricted in the exercise of their almost regal power, were passed at the suggestion of the Archbishop; and the council of barons, by whom the kingdom seems to have been governed up to that time, was fain to sign them. We still, however, find no recognition of the right of the lesser nobles to a share in the legislation; though from this time forward, they seem to have been frequently consulted. But it was especially in times of civil disturbances that the political rights of this class assumed a distinct character; and no one seems to have done so much towards it as John Zápolya, Woiwode of Transylvania, whose constant policy it was to ally himself with this party, and by their means to weaken the King and higher nobles, and so obtain the crown of Hungary for himself. Not unfrequently it happened that these stormy assemblies secured the person of the King or his counsellors, and obliged them to yield to their commands. Sometimes their dissolution was the signal for civil war; sometimes they threatened to surround Pest and Buda, and force the

* Engel claims an earlier origin for the Diet, on the strength of a meeting summoned by the King in 1061; but it was never regarded as a precedent, nor do I think the greatest stickler for antiquity would desire that it should, for it ended in the King's hanging and flogging all those whom he could not bring over to his own way of thinking.

consent of the Crown to their wishes by starvation; sometimes with boisterous loyalty they declared themselves ready to die for their King and country, and with freshened zeal rushed from the council to the battle-field.

It must have been a spirit-stirring sight, those vast hordes of armed men encamped on this plain to discuss the laws and interests of the nation, and armed to defend, in case of need, what they believed to be their right. Like most eastern nations, the Magyars have much calmness in council; and, like them, too, that strange susceptibility to excitement which changes in a moment from the tranquillity of deliberation to the wildest outbreaks of feeling and passion. It is not wonderful that history has given to these assemblies a character of more importance than they really deserve; for here, as every where else in a purely popular assembly, a designing chief generally ruled the mass; but the romance attached to antiquity has twined itself round these ancient monuments of liberty, and concealed from those who now look upon them, every thing but a faint outline of past freedom and glory! Even yet, some of the old Magyars sigh as they think of the time when their ancestors assembled on the Rákos Mezö, and set both their King and his foreign counsellors at defiance. Prince Metternich would have but a rude reception from such a meeting: the old Hungarian cry of "Away with the Germans, they corrupt our King!" would burst from many a tongue, when loosened by the enthusiasm such a meeting would excite.

As we drove on to this vast plain, we might almost have fancied the scenes of former centuries were revived before us. In the distance we perceived a host of white tents stretching along the horizon, as far as the eye could follow them, the glance of bright arms were flashing in the sun, and ever and anon the sounds of martial music were caught up by the ear: but, as we drew nigh, the fancy was dispelled; the ugly white jacket and black gaiter, and the very unpoetical bayonet, following the *links* and *rechts* of modern drill, but ill-supplied the place of Hungary's best chivalry, its sabre, lance, and gallant steed, its loud shout of war, its wild impetuous onset, and its rich and varied costume glittering in the sun and fluttering on the breeze. An Austrian regiment of infantry may be among the best drilled, best dressed, best behaved troops in the world—I know nothing about the matter; but a more ill-fashioned set of fellows, in the eye of the civilian, it is hardly possible to conceive.

Another part of this plain now forms a race-course; and, re-

port says, a pretty good one. We were too late for the races, and I can therefore speak of them only from hearsay. The races, which take place in May or June, last for fourteen days; during which time there are public dinners, balls, and every other approved mode of passing idle hours. Much opposition, much jealousy, much ridicule, have been employed to put down these races; but their continued and increasing success testifies how innoxious it has proved.

The most amusing scene to an Englishman must be the races between the Csikósák (horse keepers,) who ride their own long-tailed steeds, without saddles, and in their own strange costumes —as wild a looking troop as that which first followed Attila over the plains of Europe. It was at first impossible to make these men understand the disadvantage of heavy weights for jockeys; nor was it till after they had been repeatedly beaten, that they would confess that little boys could ride a race, and win it from full-grown men. The excellent riding of the Hungarians, for which their hussars have long been celebrated, is more particularly to be found among the Csikósák. The nobles, even the lower grades, so commonly make use of carriages rather than horses, that I scarcely think they can be good horsemen: but the Csikós is on horseback almost from his birth: indeed, I suspect he sometimes learns to ride before he can walk. I have seen the merest children, without bridle or saddle—a string round the horse's nose supplied the place of the first, a bunda thrown across his back, the second,—gallopping at full speed after a herd of unbroken colts, overtake and turn them. dash into the middle of them, and select those they required, apparently without the slightest fear.

Although it is impossible to conceive any thing more perfect than their seat on horseback, their general management of horses is sadly defective. I have heard it frequently said, that, if an Hungarian groom is once allowed to mount a horse, his mouth is spoiled for ever; and I can easily believe it, for the treatment they receive from them is excessively rough and cruel. In travelling through Hungary, the stranger can hardly fail to notice the number of horses which have lost an eye; and he will easily account for it if he watches a Csikós, when enraged, beat his horse. The drivers have an equally bad character; and it is a common complaint that good horses cannot be employed for the purposes of agriculture, from the carelessness with which they are treated.

But the horses have fairly run away with me! It is time I pulled up, and bethought myself of the fiacre and Pest! With your permission then, gentle reader, we will return to the river, cross the bridge of boats, and visit the wonders of Buda. On the way let me point out, as we pass through the best streets of Pest, the gay pictures exhibited by almost all the shops of respectable pretensions. After a fashion once common with us, and of which one or two specimens still exist in London, every shop has a name and sign: so that you may buy your cigars at the *Young Prince;* your cravats, at the *Three Graces;* and bonbons, at the *English Lord;* and for the instruction of those who do not read, or to attract the attention of those who do, these subjects are all illustrated by large paintings in a style by no means contemptible. For my part, I like these signs; they give an air of life and gaiety to the streets, which is sadly wanting in the rich but affectedly simple arrangements of our shops. A West-end hotel-keeper, or fashionable tailor, would be horrified at the idea of a large painted sign on either side his doorway; because with us every one apes his betters, and plain John Smith's shop is converted into Mr. Smith's museum, or office, or nobody knows what.

The Bridge of boats, of one thousand four hundred and forty Vienna feet long, which unites Pest with Buda, is guarded at either end by a toll-house. However, the fiacre drove on, and no one seemed to think of stopping us; a good coat frees its wearer from toll in every part of Hungary. By law every noble and citizen is toll-free; and as these are the only coated classes, or nearly so, the coat is a tolerable guarantee of indemnity; but as the reverse of the proposition is not equally determinate, it would require nothing less than a Falstaff's instinct for the true blood to find out the nobility under the strange guises in which it sometimes conceals itself here. I had begun to think there must be some secret impress which the nobles bore—for it was quite beyond my powers of discrimination to tell which was gentle, and which simple, of the passers—till one of the toll-keepers explained the matter much more plainly: "To confess the truth," he said, "we stop all we think likely to pay; from those who are willing, we take it; and as for those who are not, why we let them pass without." Yet the revenues of the bridge amount to sixteen thousand florins per annum—a pretty good proof of the intercourse kept up between the two cities.

As we jolted over the uneven planks, a light four-oared wherry,

which the first glance told us was London-built, came swiftly down the stream, and shot the bridge cleverly enough. It belonged to Count Széchenyi; and was well pulled by himself and some friends, with feathered oars and every thing in proper order. The Danube is a glorious river for boating; for although the stream is strong, the reflux in-shore is sufficiently powerful to aid considerably in pulling against it, and the beautiful islands, in the neighbourhood of Pest, give to rowing here an additional charm. The Elizabeth island, which lies about a mile above the bridge, is one of the most beautiful spots imaginable, and will some day be the favourite park of the gay world of Pest. Some cunning monks once petitioned the King to give it them for a kitchen-garden; and a very nice one it would have made, as it is not less than two miles in circumference.

The principal part of Buda stands on an isolated rock, which is still walled in; while the suburbs cluster round its base, and extend more than a mile along the banks of the river. Behind the town range a long line of hills famous for their red wines. The Buda wines, of which perhaps the Adelsberger is the best, are very full-bodied, and require to be kept several years before they are drunk; they resemble the Burgundy wines both in quality and flavour more than any other I know. These would probably be the best wines for the English market of any of those grown in Hungary.

The Fortress, besides the palace, commonly inhabited by the Palatine, and some very handsome private houses, contains a number of large buildings occupied by the offices of the *Königliche Statthalterei* (the vice-regal council,) and the *Ungarische Hofkammer* (Hungarian court-chamber,) besides the directory of customs, of posts, of education, agriculture, &c., &c.

We have already, in speaking of the Diet, attempted to give some account of the legislative power of Hungary; a few words on the Königliche Statthalterei may suffice to give an idea of the higher executive department. The Vice-regal Council (*Consilium regium locumtenentiale,*) consisting of the Palatine as president, with twenty-five *intimates* chosen by the King from among the prelates, magnates, and gentry of Hungary, is nominally the efficient privy council of the Crown in all affairs regarding Hungary. The King receives their advice, and proposes questions for their consideration. Besides this, they receive the decrees of the King and the acts of the Diet, both of which they are bound to see duly executed. They correspond with the

counties, regulate the accounts of taxes, superintend the distribution of the military, enjoy the supreme direction of the police, &c., &c.

This council is said to depend immediately on the King; which, if it means any thing, should signify that its members are virtually ministers. But though they correspond immediately with the King, and receive decrees only when stamped with the sign manual, yet a little clause is added which gives the whole affair a very different colour: that is, *that all these communications shall pass through the Hungarian State Chancery in Vienna*—in other words, that the members of the Statthalterei shall be very like puppets to be played upon by an Austrian minister.

This, however great an evil it is, can scarcely be avoided in a union like that of Austria and Hungary; at least, without granting to Hungary a responsible ministry with seats in the Diet,—a measure which Austria will never concede while she can avoid it. It would be unjust to throw all the blame of this upon the ministers of Austria; for the extreme difficulties under which they labour, with an empire so divided by race, language, and national antipathies, requires a very firm and consolidated centre to keep it together: unfortunately, however, they have not taken the best means within their power to obviate these difficulties. It has been the policy of Austria to increase these hatreds and these differences by continually making each feel the injury it receives from its union with the others, where each ought to have felt only the benefits. Hungary produced good tobacco, and at one time supplied all Italy; but its export to Italy was rendered too costly for the Italians to profit by it, while at the same time foreign tobacco was excluded from Lombardy under the plea of protecting Hungary. English and French manufactures were excluded from Hungary, to aid those of Austria and Bohemia; yet the Hungarians could not exchange their beef, corn, and wine, even for these products, without paying the same frontier duties as if sent to a foreign country. They had all the disadvantages both of union and separation.

National antipathy, too, has been fostered by mutual though involuntary injuries. The insolence of the Italian and Austrian troops quartered in Hungary has imbittered the Hungarian peasantry to the highest degree against the *Schwab* and *Tolyány*, as they call them; while the roughness of the Hungarians at Milan have made the Italians hate those whom they believe to be the willing instruments of Italy's oppression: and—would the reader

believe it?—this has been considered a masterpiece of policy! There are those who see signs of better things in the future,—God grant they may see clearly!

We must quit the fiacre, reader, for a while; and stroll gently round those ramparts, now converted into pleasant walks, but formerly so often stained with Christian and Moslem blood. Though I trust we are both stout haters of Russia, and quite willing to pray for the regeneration of Turkey; yet it is impossible to compare the state of Hungary with that of the countries on the other side the Danube, and not rejoice that Lorraine and Eugene drove the turbaned tyrant from this, his strongest hold in Europe.

For one hundred and forty-five years did the Turks remain masters of Buda: yet almost the only evidences of their former dominion are some baths near the Danube, and the tomb of a saint; the former of which are still used by the Christians, and the latter is sometimes visited by a pious Moslem pilgrim. The Turkish baths, which are supplied by natural sulphur-springs, are small vaulted rooms, with steps leading down to the bottom, along which the bathers lie at different depths. If I might judge from my feelings merely, I should say that the steam which arises from these springs is much hotter than the water itself; for, though it was quite painful to support the heat of the steam, the water appeared only moderately warm.

It is not easy to imagine a more perfect contrast than is presented by the environs of Pest and Buda; the one a bare sandy plain; the other hill and valley, beautifully varied with rock and wood. Hitherto this romantic neighbourhood has been sadly neglected; but as the taste for the picturesque is extended, and the wealthy citizens of Pest begin to desire the imaginary importance conferred by landed possessions, and the real luxury of country-houses, the hills of Buda will be as well covered with suburban villas and mimic castles as Richmond or Hampstead. At present, the taste for the picturesque is, perhaps, as little felt in Hungary as in almost any country in Europe. The negligence with which the position of a house is commonly chosen, the absence of gardens and parks, or, if present, the bad taste with which they are laid out, and the carelessness with which they are kept, are strong evidence of this deficiency.

There are, however, some very striking exceptions; among which, Gödölö, in the neighbourhood of Pest, stands pre-eminent. In spite of the disadvantages of a sandy soil, and rather a flat

situation, it would be difficult in any part of England to find a flower-garden either more tastefully disposed, or more perfectly kept, than that of the Princess Grassalkovich. All the varieties of lawn, boscage, and bower—all the lesser elegancies of trellis, basket, and bouquet, have been taken advantage of in the best manner. Another beauty of Gödölö is the Dairy. It is situated in what was formerly a forest; and which, by judicious cutting out, now forms a very beautiful natural park. In appearance it is a pretty little villa, and we entered by an elegantly furnished parlour which leads into a circular saloon. On each side of this saloon open two folding-doors, which disclosed—what shall I say?—two vaccine drawing-rooms! for cow-houses I cannot call them. A wide walk runs through the centre of the rooms in the form of a cross, towards which looked about one hundred cows; and, at the angles of the cross, four magnificent bulls. Nothing could be better behaved than this society; the very bulls had a *sotto-voce* bellow, quite different from that of vulgar bulls, by which they expressed their sovereign wishes to their matron dames. The cows are of Swiss breed; on one side of the dairy they are all red, on the other all spotted. Behind each cow was a diary of her age, food, milk, &c., &c. The Swiss cows are preferred, I believe, rather for their beauty and rarity, than for any superiority in milking or feeding, to the native white or dun breed of Hungary; which, by a little care and attention, might probably be much improved. It is doubtful whether the introduction of new breeds, or the cultivation of those natural to the country, is the more advantageous.

But it is not, certes, at Gödölö, amid the beauties which art and nature have alike thrown around the place, that such speculations intrude themselves; we were too much dazzled and delighted to be critical. It is impossible that any of our party should forget the delightful evening which we spent in that pretty park, with its noble trees, and wild deer, as they every now and then crossed our path,—the drive through the woods, and, least of all, the society of its amiable and accomplished mistress, which throws a charm over every thing within its sphere. But, such matters tend little to your instruction, reader, however much they may have done to our pleasure; and, besides, they trench on that strict line of non-allusion to any but public characters which I have drawn for myself. "*Revenons à nos moutons.*"

The stillness of Buda contrasts very strongly with the active

bustle of Pest. Buda is the residence of the Bureaucracy of Hungary, and there is always about these gentry a certain sedateness of air, and not unfrequently a pompous vacancy of expression, which has nothing analogous to the haughty look of the rich noble, or the quick glance of the enterprising merchant of Pest; and Buda seems to have caught the complexion of its inhabitants. The royal palace, occupied by the Palatine, the residence of the commander of the garrison, and the houses of two or three great families, give an air of dignity, but not of life, to the town; and, as we walked round the ramparts, and admired its beautiful position, it was quite a relief that the establishment of a permanent bridge would soon restore to Buda* its share of life and prosperity, of which its young and lusty rival seemed in danger of robbing it entirely.

We now left the fortress; and, passing some rows of ill-built houses, ascended the Blocksberg, the pride and ornament of the landscape. The small building on the top is an observatory, where there is a good set of instruments, but we did not stop to see them. The view from the Blocksberg is magnificent. Buda, with its blue chain of mountains vanishing in the distance, Pest, with its yellow plain of sand, and the glorious Danube, with its green islands, were all at our feet, forming a picture so beautifully mixed up with buildings, boats, and moving figures, that we sat long to watch it ere we felt inclined to move. There was matter for much thought too in that view. One hundred and fifty years ago, Pest, now so beautiful and flourishing, was a mere heap of ruins; its mud walls broken down, its houses destroyed, and its few inhabitants flying from the desolation around them. At that time, too, a Turkish Pasha sat in the fortress of Buda, and nearly half of Hungary was subject to his sway. In one hundred and fifty years, then, has this place grown to its present size; from a miserable ruin, it has become one of the capitals of Europe! Nor does Pest owe its rise to the fiat of a monarch, who could raise a Potsdam or a Carlsruhe from the desert; but to the energy of the people and its own natural ad-

* The railroad from Vienna through Raab to Buda, not dreamed of at the time of our visit, though now in active preparation, will do much to raise the importance of Buda still higher. Since 1836 no less than four or five lines of railroad, traversing Hungary in every direction, have been proposed, and some of them actually undertaken. The success of steam navigation has given a stimulus to enterprise and speculation in Hungary, from which the country will eventually reap a golden harvest.

vantages. Situated nearly in the centre of one of the richest countries in the world, on the banks of a river which traverses more than half of Europe, surrounded by a population requiring a supply of almost every article of luxury from abroad, chosen by fashion as the metropolis, with a good climate, and capable of unlimited extent on every side, it requires but little sagacity to foresee a brilliant future for Buda-Pest. No one can wish its prosperity more sincerely than the author of these pages; for he believes that with it is closely associated the prosperity of all Hungary, and perhaps too the independence of the east of Europe.

CHAPTER X.

FURED AND THE BALATON.

Excursion to Füred.—Inn at Márton Vásár.—Houses under ground.—Style of Travelling.—Stuhlweissenburg.—Veszprim.—Minaret.—Bishop.—Treading out the corn.—Füred—our reception—Theatre.—The Balaton.—Dinner party.—Soirée.—Hungarian beauty.—Ball.—Waltzing.—H——'s Adventures at Tihany.—Supper at the Restaurant's—its Consequences.—Serenade.—Gipsy Band.—Four-in-hand Driving.—Tihany.—Monastery.—Fossils.—Tradition of the Peasants.—Second Ball.—The Polonaise.—The Hungarian Dance.—Return.

About eighty miles south of Pest, on the shores of the Balaton, there is a pretty little bathing-place called Füred; which is worth the stranger's visiting, as well for the beauty of the neighbouring scenery, as for the pleasant and sociable society which commonly assembles there.

As the weather was fine, and nothing was going on of particular interest at Pest, we determined to avail ourselves of it; and, making our arrangements accordingly for a few days' excursion, started for Füred.

The road, as far as Stuhlweissenburg, which terminated our first day's journey, contains little of interest, except a good house and pretty park of Count Brunswick's at Márton Vásár, where we stopped to dine. Márton Vásár is rather a favourable specimen of a Hungarian village, and the inn bore marks of a thriving commerce; and, as a specimen of its class, I may as well describe it. It is a long one-storied house, forming two sides of a court-yard, and, besides the kitchen and landlord's room, contains a large drinking-room for the peasants, and two strangers' rooms. The latter have boarded floors, thickly strewn over with sand; and are furnished each with two beds, a table, and three or four wooden chairs. In half an hour we had a dinner of soup, bouilli, vegetables cooked in grease, roast fowls, and pancakes; and such is the common fare and ordinary accommodations of the country inns of Hungary.

I was wrong in saying that there was nothing of interest save

Count Brunswick's house; for, a little further on, we observed several villages built under ground, the roof being the only part of the houses visible. We examined some of these burrows, for such they literally are; and found them mere holes cut in the ground, roofed in with straw, and entered by a sloping path, frequently without any other opening than the doorway and chimney, and as filthy and miserable as can well be imagined. What may seem to render the fact more extraordinary is, that one of these villages, we were told, is inhabited entirely by noblemen; that is, by men who possess a small portion of land, pay no taxes to Government, and are free from all seigneurial impositions. Let the reader keep this fact in mind; for it serves to show that it is not the amount of taxation which renders men poor and miserable, but the absence of a knowledge and desire of something better, and of the industry and thousand virtues to which that knowledge gives birth. It is but fair to say that I never saw such houses in any other part of Hungary; though I believe, during the Turkish war, a great part of the country was reduced to a similar state.

Stuhlweissenburg, though formerly a Roman town, and a name of frequent occurrence in Hungarian history, contains nothing remarkable. The palace of the bishop, and some of the buildings connected with it, are handsome; but the streets are badly paved, and the whole town disagreeably placed in the centre of a huge bog.

The next morning we passed through Palota, and while we were waiting for fresh horses walked round the ruins of the old castle, which a Count Zichy—one of the fifty-two Counts Zichy of Hungary—has had the good taste to repair and render habitable.

At Veszprim, the seat of another bishop, we stayed long enough to visit the handsome episcopal palace, which crowns a steep hill that formerly bore one of the most important fortresses of Hungary. This was for a long time in the possession of the Turks; and contains a memorial of their residence, the more interesting from its rarity. One slender minaret, erected by the Turks above an old Gothic tower, still retains its elegant proportions. It now serves as a watch-tower against fire: where the Muezzim daily called the faithful Moslem to his spiritual duties, a watchman now warns his Christian brethren of danger to their worldly goods.

The town of Veszprim is, chiefly supported by trade, but not

of a very high class. It contains few good houses, but has less appearance of absolute poverty about it than almost any town I know. A party of the better sort of country people, whom we fell in with in this neighbourhood, gave us but a bad character of the bishop and chapter of Veszprim as landlords. They complained sadly of their oppression, and said that the peasants of the church were worse off even than the peasants of the nobles, for the masters of the former had no permanent interest in their welfare, but tried to grasp as much as they could during the short period of their enjoyment. A young girl of about eighteen years of age, one of the party, observed, rather caustically, "*Ach Gott!* Hungarian priests are not worse than any other priests; they are all tyrants when they have the power to be so." It is curious that, round the room of the village inn where this conversation occurred, were hung the portraits of Lord John Russell, Stanley, Burdett, and Count Széchenyi.

As we pursued our journey, early as it was in the year, we had several opportunities of remarking the old custom of treading out the corn by oxen or horses, so often and so beautifully alluded to in sacred history. It is commonly performed in the open field where the corn is cut. A flat piece of ground is prepared, by paring and beating till it is quite hard, for the "threshing-floor;" the corn is then strewn over it; and a boy with a long whip stands in the centre, and drives the animals round the ring till the whole is sufficiently cleaned. It is still considered in Hungary the part of a miser "to muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn." I cannot explain the pleasurable feeling produced by an actual illustration of this kind, simple as it is, of images which have been familiar to the mind from our earliest infancy, but of which we have never felt half the force or beauty till actually before our eyes.

It was near evening as we came in view of the Balaton; and, if not grand, its shores have sufficient hill and wood, as seen from this point, to give them all the character of pretty lake scenery. Füred is a bathing-place which has come into vogue only within the last few years; and, except for the huge *Horváthischen Haus*, and a few other less pretending buildings, it is yet as near a state of nature as the most romantic could desire. The Horváthischen Haus is a large hotel, or rather lodging-house, which has been built by Mr. Horváth, the owner of the place; and, except the rooms reserved for his family, is let out to visiters at a very moderate rate.

We drove up directly to this hotel, and inquired if we could be admitted; but a very positive "No!" was returned by the porter, with the pleasant addition, "that he did not think there was a single room to be had in the whole place." While a search was being made for rooms among the half-dozen houses which constitute Füred, all the idlers of the place began to collect round the carriage to stare at the Englishmen, whom our servant had not failed to announce the roofless strangers to be. At the same time, a number of very bright eyes were observed peeping through the *jalousies* of the hotel, tantalizing us with the desire to stay, as every refusal of our applications for a resting-place made us fear we must return. The crowd of gentlemen grew every moment thicker; and as I have a particular dislike to being stared at, I began to return as uncivil looks as possible to what I thought the ill-mannered curiosity of these people. But I was soon undeceived, for it appeared that they were only at a loss in what language to address us; and, before long, one of them came up, and, speaking to us in French, very politely offered his services to aid us in our difficulties. The ice once broken, Hungarian frankness made us at home with the whole party in a few seconds. A lodging was soon found, the present occupants having been persuaded to change them in our favour. A little female curiosity was, I believe, after all, our best friend; for, as I afterwards heard, the Countess B—— declared that three Englishmen at a country bathing-place, and the first who had ever been there, were too great a catch to be lost so easily; she, therefore, insisted that rooms should be found; and found they were accordingly.

While we were waiting till our quarters were prepared for us, we were subjected to the "question" as unmercifully as any poor victims of the inquisition ever were. A thousand odd queries as to our names, titles, country, and objects, did we reply to, and, I am proud to say, with great good humour too—maugre our English breeding; for we saw that the inquirers had no other wish than to be polite and friendly, albeit the manner of it had somewhat startled us at first.

As our visiters disappeared, to scatter far and wide the news they had been so industriously collecting, we were left alone to discuss a late dinner, and laugh over the adventures of our arrival, which offered so pleasant a prospect for the rest of our visit. We were not doomed to rest long in quiet, however; for, almost before we could change our dusty dresses, it was time for the

theatre, where we were promised a still nearer view of all those bright eyes which had so sparkled from behind the *jalousies*. Nor were we disappointed: a perfect galaxy of beauty seemed to have descended on that little theatre, and amply compensated for the horrors of what was called an opera. It was an Hungarian piece, taken from some scene of Hungarian history, to which was badly adapted the music of an indifferent German opera; the whole murdered in a most melancholy manner. A severe headache soon drove me back to my own room; but S—— remained, and was introduced to a number of the notables, with whom he came back in perfect ecstasies. Mr. Horvâth invited us to meet a party at his house to dinner the next day.

On looking round us in the morning, we found we were just on the reedy shore of the lake, which offers nothing but low hills on the other side; and, on this, not a tree or a rock, still less a grassy bank, to render it passable. At some little distance to the south, however, the peninsula of Tihany is a very striking and beautiful object; and the monastery and its church look well on the summit of the hill. H—— soon set off to see if he could get a sketch of it; and we determined not to leave without paying it a visit.

The Balaton, or Platten See, extends for fifty miles, nearly north-east and south-west; its breadth is nowhere more than eight or nine miles, and in some places scarcely one; its medium depth is about six fathoms. Nearly opposite Füred it opens into the river Sio, which communicates with the Danube, but is not navigable. It is difficult for an Englishman to imagine a fine inland lake of this kind, totally useless for the purposes of commerce or pleasure. I believe there is not a single trading barge, and certainly not one sailing-boat on the whole lake! There never was a people who had less natural disposition to navigation than the Hungarians. Their rivers and lakes seem to be of more use to them when frozen than when fluid; for, on observing to a gentleman of this neighbourhood how extraordinary it was that they did not use the lake as a means of communication, "Oh!" he exclaimed, "we do in winter; we drive from one end to the other of it, as if it were a road."

The supply of fish from the Balaton seems almost without a limit, and is very various in kind. A great part of it is sent to the markets of Pest and Vienna. The Fogas (Perca lucioperca) is said to be found only in the Balaton, and its peculiar structure

has rendered it well-known to the learned.* The delicacy of its flavour, and the firmness of its texture, constitute it perhaps the best fresh-water fish in Europe. The craw-fish of the Balaton, which in size is more like a small lobster than the poor little things which our brooks produce, is equally sought after as a delicacy by the gourmand.

Our dinner was as good and gay as the well-known hospitality and good-humour of the host could make it. As usual in Hungary, it was at two o'clock; and as usual, also, profuse in quantity, and excellent in quality. The ceremony of bowing, and among relations of kissing, on retiring to the drawing-room, was a novelty to us, of which we could not well understand the rationale. I imagine it must be the substitute for the Turkish "May your food be healthy to you!" I believe it is common in many parts of Germany; for I remember seeing a whole party of gentlemen kiss each other after a dinner party in Berlin, to my no small horror. By the by, kissing among men is almost as rare in Hungary as with us.

We separated at an early hour, and were invited to return at five o'clock and join a *réunion* of all the most distinguished persons at Füred in Mr. Horvâth's drawing-room. Soon after the hour appointed, we found a party of sixty or seventy persons assembled, among whom there was certainly a greater number of pretty women than I ever saw in any other society of the same extent. The Hungarian ladies are handsome,—that is beyond a doubt; but here was a galaxy of beauty, extraordinary even for Hungary. To tell my readers their names would be of no service, and to describe woman's beauty is next to impossible; so I believe I must leave it to the best of painters—their own imaginations. I may venture to say, however, that the characteristics of Hungarian beauty are, a large full eye, very dark hair, with a fair complexion; features of little regularity, perhaps, but delicately formed, especially the mouth and chin, which have very rarely that heavy, coarse outline which adheres so pertinaciously to the Saxon race. But there was one *blonde* among them, whom I cannot pass over; she was of exquisite loveliness, and most rare beauty; her features were perfectly regular, her blue eyes full of sweetness and expression, and her complexion one of the purest conceivable. The Countess M—— was the only person who ever recalled to my memory the head of the

* Csaplovics says it is found also in the Nile, and in some parts of Siberia.

Cenci: can I say more? It was long before I would ask an introduction to her; I watched every delicate play of the features, every subdued smile which hovered round the lips, and left my imagination to interpret them as it would, ere I destroyed the illusion by the common-places of a drawing-room conversation. But ill-nature had its place at Füred, as well as elsewhere; and an envious brunette whispered that the object of my fanciful attentions had actually been *out* for two whole winters, and was, moreover, rather addicted to flirting,—information which, though I did not believe one word of it, brought my day-dream to a sudden termination.

We did not think that the gentlemen, or at least the generality of them, appeared to equal advantage in the drawing-room with the ladies; or perhaps we were not equally willing to do them credit. Many of them looked shy and awkward, huddled together in groups in corners and door-ways, and seemed little inclined to mix in conversation with the ladies.

We could not help smiling at the stiffness of some young officers, who entered the room very much as if they were still at drill. Their uniform, a white coat, as short as possible in the tail, as much padded as possible in the breast, and unrelieved by epaulette or embroidery, and trowsers so tight that they seemed in constant danger of suffocating the unhappy wearers, did not form the most becoming costume in the world. When three or four figures so attired marched into the centre of the drawing-room, drew themselves up to "attention," and, striking both heels together so as to make their spurs ring, bobbed their heads forwards, faced to the left and bobbed again, then to the right and bobbed again, thinking when they had performed these evolutions that they had practised the most approved art and style of entering a room, Heraclitus himself could not but have smiled at the picture. With the aid of tea, cards, coffee, and small talk, the *soirée* continued till nine o'clock, when it was declared time to adjourn to a ball in the public rooms.

These rooms were those commonly occupied by the restaurateur of the place, and it was for his benefit the ball was given. The society was more mixed, and bore an air of far less elegance than that of Mr. Horváth's drawing-room; in fact, there were two or three coteries here, and we were lucky enough to have been taken up by the best. The waltz and gallopade were when we arrived in full activity, in spite of the heat of a July evening. I never saw a people more decidedly fond of dancing. No intro-

duction to the ladies is required; the first partner who offers is accepted; they whirl two or three times round the room, and then the gentlemen set their ladies down, and away with others: scarce a word seems to be exchanged; dancing is the object, and they never lose sight of it.

Except the dancers, the gentlemen stand in the middle of the room, while the ladies sit in a row all round. The sexes, except for the purpose of dancing, seem as rigidly separated as in the Protestant churches here; the ladies are even left to promenade the rooms alone, and I believe it was looked upon as sadly heterodox when we offered our arms to accompany the ladies with whom we were speaking. Some of the men were uncouth enough, not in dress only, but in manner. I saw one man, who evidently considered himself an *élégant*, actually combing his hair over the lap of a beautiful girl he was talking to.

The style of waltzing practised by some of the ladies rather astonished our unaccustomed eyes. Strauss, and his waltzes, have introduced a quickness into the dance quite foreign to its origin, and not only destructive of all elegance, but very often of all decency too, for it requires an approximation of the persons far from reserved, at least in appearance. To make the matter still worse, some of the ladies laid their heads very unceremoniously on their cavaliers' shoulders, and sank with such an *abandon* into their arms, as they yielded to the giddy fascination of the dance, that, I must confess, my prudery was considerably shocked! It is but fair to add, that many of the dowagers declared against the propriety of such tricks, and that not one of the young ladies we had met previously was guilty of them. The society of a bathing-place is rarely too select; and there was as much variety here as could be desired by the most liberal in such matters.

We made the acquaintance of some Italian officers this evening, pleasant and very well informed men. They said they were well received by the Hungarian gentry in whose neighbourhood they lived, and were not regarded with any of that jealous suspicion under which their German comrades suffer.

When we got home from the ball, H—— had not returned from Tihany, and we concluded that he had availed himself of the hospitality of the monastery; but his hungry look, and call for breakfast, as he awoke us the following morning, were pretty good proofs that he had not tasted of the church's fare. It appears the holy brothers have been so much tormented by curious

visiters from Füred, that, for the last year or two, they have closed their doors against all comers. Luckily, a poor carpenter took pity on H——'s melancholy situation, and shared with him his meagre dinner. As evening drew on, however, H—— had discovered some very picturesque peasants, whom he persuaded to sit to him; and quite forgetting, in his delight, that the sun will set, and daylight pass away, he found himself without shelter in a dark night, and at some miles from Füred, without having once thought where he was to lay his head. The friendly carpenter came to his aid a second time, and offered him the best shelter his cottage could afford. It was a very poor one, but there was no choice, and H—— gladly accepted the offer. When they reached the door, the wife and children were already asleep. A bed, however, was soon got ready, and H—— groped his way to it, as well as he could, in the dark, for the people were too poor to indulge in the luxury of candles. He was soon convinced that he was not alone. A coughing on one side, cries on the other, a cackling and rustling of feathers above, and a butting of horns below, continued at intervals throughout the night, and afforded him abundant matter for speculation as to who and what his fellow-lodgers were; but it was not till morning broke that he became aware he had been sleeping in close proximity with two women, half a dozen children, a hen and chickens, and a great billy-goat! In fact, the good Samaritan had left his own chamber, and with it, wife, maid, and all its other occupants, to the mercy of the stranger whom he had taken under his roof. A bit of black bread and a little goat's milk was all the poor man could offer him for breakfast, but any recompense was firmly though respectfully refused.

A stroll on the promenade between the hours of ten and eleven o'clock, which capricious fashion has fixed upon as the only proper time for that exercise at Füred, and a swim in the lake, served to pass the morning. The baths are wooden sheds extending into the lake, and open towards the water; we were forbidden, however, to transgress beyond the rail, because, by so doing, we might have seen into all the other sheds, and the Baroness —— was still in one of them. We were determined on a swim, however; so, waiting very quietly till this lady—a sour-looking old dowager, by the by—was gone, we climbed the barrier, and indulged in a swim in the open lake. They say the water is salt, and that it ebbs and flows with the sea; but we were not able to perceive either the one or the other.

Some visits, a stroll in the pleasant woods, the theatre and a public supper at the restaurateur's, finished the evening; the supper, however, must not pass without a word or two. In order to support the restaurant, it was determined that all the ladies, instead of supping in their own apartments, should adjourn to this place at least once a week; and this happened to be the night. A number of persons were already there, but to our no small astonishment, in two distinct parties,—the ladies at one end of the room, and the gentlemen at the other. Supposing that this was some national custom, I believe the fear of offending would have banished us in like manner, much as it was against our inclinations, had not a little hint from Madame —— set us at liberty, by informing us that it was only because the gentlemen found their own society more agreeable than that of the ladies, that they congregated together.

Before the ladies had finished supper, the gentlemen had already begun their pipes, and the whole room was soon in a cloud of smoke. As soon as the music struck up, a scene of such riot commenced,—some were dancing, some singing, others smoking and applauding,—that I was heartily glad when the Countess B—— declared it was no longer to be borne, and left the room, followed by the whole party of ladies.

Many of these ladies, though Hungarians, were inhabitants of Vienna, and it so happened that I had a short time previously expressed my astonishment that they did not prefer their own capital to that of a country which they affected to look down upon. This was too good an opportunity of running down Hungarian society, and excusing their desertion of their own capital, to be lost: "Such," said the Countess, "are the scenes Hungarian ladies must submit to if they will frequent Hungarian society; and yet you are astonished that we should seek a more civilized circle, even though it be in the capital of Austria!" I urged, though I must confess the scenes of the past hour had rendered my pleading but very feeble, "That their own absence was probably the cause of much of this rudeness; that it was always the privilege of woman to civilize our coarser sex; and that it only depended on themselves to banish smoking and such abominations from their drawing-rooms whenever they pleased."—"Don't believe any thing of the kind," she answered; "such men easily find consolation for the want of our society, and they prefer their pipes to our drawing-rooms at any time; and, besides, the woman who should attempt such a thing would be exposed to neglect

and insult of every kind."—"But surely in the capital—" — "The capital is worse than any where else. The society there is in a most deplorable state; the excesses of the young men render it unsafe even to walk the streets: be assured, no one would live at Pest who could afford to live any where else in the world."

I could answer nothing, for I had seen but little of the country, and was talking with those who ought to have known it well; and we returned to our rooms with no favourable opinion of Hungarian society. The reader will be able to judge for himself, I trust, ere we part, how far such opinions were just: but I may as well warn him that many of the persons by whom this scene was acted were country squires, neither the highest nor most polished of their order; and that the persons from whom these remarks proceeded were absentees, totally ignorant of Pest, and anxious to find excuses for neglecting what is now beginning to be considered a duty,—a residence in the country from whence they derive their immense revenues. I have felt myself bound to relate this incident, because it did occur; but I should be unjust did I not say that it contrasted strongly with the manners we observed in every other society we entered, and that it required nothing less than the most rooted prejudice to draw from it the conclusions just related.

We were talking over these matters, and refilling our meerschaums for the last pipe,—mind, I am far from objecting to a pipe in its proper place,—when a wild burst of music came from the shores of the Balaton, and awoke the midnight echoes of the lake to most harmonious sounds. It was a serenade, which some of the heroes of the supper-room had offered—we hope in contrition—to the offended fair. Nothing could be finer or more soothing than those soft notes, now swelling on the breeze, now dying away over the waters of the lake; and we trust they may have obtained pardon for the sinners.

It would be ungrateful, while lauding the music, were we to keep silence as to those who made it. The Füred band was really a very good one, and it surprised us not a little to hear that it was composed entirely of gipsies; yes, that same thieving, lying, music-loving race, of whom we so often see a stray member in our own villages scraping a jig on a three-stringed fiddle, is found here, too, and busy in the same idleness. But instead of strumming at village wakes with country bumpkins for their auditors, we found them here in stately festivals, ministering to the plea-

sures of the nobles of the land; and, instead of a crazy fiddle, a well-conditioned orchestra might have been formed out of the gipsy band.

The leader was not the least remarkable of the party, for, though not more than fourteen years of age, he was a most accomplished violinist. He had studied for some months under Strauss, in Vienna, and had received high commendations from his master; but what Strauss certainly had not intended to teach, though it was no slight element of his pupil's success, was a most perfect imitation of those extraordinary movements by which the body of the great waltz-player seems convulsed during his performance, and which our little Czigány took off so admirably as to keep his audience in a roar of laughter. I have seen the gipsies—Czigány, as the Hungarians called them—as actors also, and they are not very much worse than the generality of strolling players in other lands.

A great bustle was heard next morning in the quiet streets of Füred; horns were sounding, horses neighing, and wheels rattling to and fro at an unaccustomed rate. It appeared that all this was in preparation for a driving party. There were not less than twenty fours-in-hand here, and the greater part of them were on this day to turn out. But, oh! what erroneous ideas are conveyed by words. Twenty fours-in-hand! Glorious reminiscences of the palmy days of the old club torment one's fancy at the very sound; alas! the sight of them was quite enough to banish any such visions. The common Hungarian four-in-hand is a low britchska, or calèche, ill-painted, ill-cleaned, and drawn by four long-tailed horses about fourteen hands and a half high, with thin legs, bare bones, and devoid of any one point of beauty.

The harness, though of the worst quality and in the worst state, is often ornamented with ribbons, and has generally long thongs of leather hanging loosely from the head, shoulders, and croup, as low as the knees. The reins are all mixed together in what appeared to us a most incomprehensible jumble, and those of the fore-horse are often fixed to the wheelers; yet, in spite of these disadvantages, they drive at full gallop, and turn very suddenly and very adroitly. The whole secret lies in the whip, and the horses commonly bear very evident marks of their drivers' skill in its application.

When a first-rate Hungarian coachman starts for a drive, before he takes up his master, he blows a horn, flogs his horses well

into spirits, gallops them half a dozen times round the court, throws them on their haunches, and, when he has worked them into a foam, dashes up to the door at full speed, to the applause and admiration of surrounding Jehus. The dress of the coachman—of course I speak of the servants—was singular enough to our eyes: he generally wears a dirty hussar uniform,—the jacket off, however, in summer, and hanging over one shoulder, —Hessian boots and spurs, with a broad-brimmed low-crowned hat ornamented with a bunch of flowers or feathers.

Except for this driving party, I do not remember to have seen the gentlemen at Füred engaged in any one amusement, save that of lounging about in groups and smoking their meerschaums. The pipe is rarely out of their mouths, and appears to supply the place of those athletic exercises in which we so much delight.

An excursion to Tihany was planned for this evening. After a drive of two or three miles along the shore of the lake, we crossed a small stream which separates Tihany from the main land, making it in fact an island. We passed the remains of some ancient fortifications as we ascended the hill to the monastery. This monastery, one of the earliest Christian establishments in Hungary, was founded by King Andreas I. in 1057, in remembrance of the defeat of the Germans, a year or two previously, in this neighbourhood. Only a very small part of what at present exists can be referred to an earlier date than last century; and it is now so concealed by whitewash, that it has no claim to interest on the score of antiquity.

We were shown over it, though with a sulky and distrustful air; but there was nothing to excite a remark in its long cold passages and simple church. The views from the windows over the lake are fine; the kitchen was large, and seemed well supplied; and among the cooks were the prettiest peasant girls we had seen in the whole country round.

A number of children came out from the cottages, and brought us handfuls of a fossil which is found in great quantities at the foot of the limestone rock on which the monastery stands. Beudant says they are broken shells of an oyster common in the Jura lime; I dare not dispute the matter on my own responsibility,* but I cannot help doubting it.

* Mr. Sowerby, to whom a specimen has been shown, says that, as far as he can judge from such a fragment, he thinks it a part of a mytilus, to a fresh-water species of which it certainly bears a strong resemblance.

The peasants have a way of their own to account for them; they call them "goats' hoofs," to which they have a most extraordinary resemblance, and attribute their origin to the reign of King Bela. When Hungary, they say, was so sadly ravaged by the Tartars in the olden times, the king was obliged to cross the Danube for safety, and was at last driven to take refuge, with all his flocks and herds, in the island of Tihany. The Tartars, however, followed him so closely that he could not remain even there; and, finding it impossible to secure his goats, he determined at any rate, that the enemy should not have them, so he drove them all into the lake and drowned them. In time their hoofs turned to stone, and a great many of them have been washed up on the shore, from that day to this, but without diminishing their numbers.

Round the greater part of Tihany the limestone rocks present a craggy cliff to the lake, while in the interior the surface is formed like the crater of a volcano, the centre of which is occupied by a small lake. I thought too I perceived traces of volcanic action in some of the rocks, and I should have liked much to have made further researches; but the ladies were waiting, and between geology and gallantry, of course, there could be no hesitation.

Another ball, given by two gentlemen, concluded our visit to Füred. It differed little from the former, except that the company was more select, and the supper much better. It was opened by a *polonaise*, a solemn kind of promenade, in which every one is expected to take part. Each gentleman, touching the ends of a lady's fingers, marches with her to slow music for two or three minutes, and then, yielding her to the gentleman before him, takes the partner of the one behind; and so on in turn with the whole party, so that in time every gentleman has danced with every lady. To men short of conversation it is a most convenient arrangement. I tried the effect of making the same observation—of course a very brilliant one—to every passing lady, and amused myself with watching the different answers it produced.

We had an opportunity this evening of seeing the Hungarian national dance very well performed. A lady and gentleman stand up, and dance opposite each other; the gentleman commences a variety of contortions, gradually increasing from calm to wild, jumping about in all manner of forms, and making innumerable steps; while the lady seems to keep up a sort of running accom-

paniment, very modest in its gestures, and always retiring as her partner advances. The dance becomes quicker and quicker as it goes on, till at last the gentleman seizes his partner in his arms, whirls her round and round, quits her, again seizes her, and, again whirling round, at last conducts her to a seat, quite exhausted with fatigue. To me it seems the most pantomimic of any dance I know; it is impossible not to see the courtship of the lover, the coy reserve of the maiden, the gradual yielding of her reserve, the final triumph of love, and the wild joy it excites, in the various movements of the dance. I cannot say it is an elegant dance; but it is full of expression, and requires no slight agility to perform it well.

We remained at the ball till day-light was peeping through the shutters, when the horses were announced as in waiting. We then bade adieu to the kind and hospitable friends we had met, drank bumpers of Champagne to the toasts some of the wilder spirits insisted on proposing, and started at last amidst a flourish of music, which they had brought out to do honour to our departure. Our journey back to Pest produced nothing worth recording.

CHAPTER XI.

COUNTRY LIFE AND PEASANTRY.

Occupations of the Hungarian Country Gentlemen.—Silk Growing.—Merino Sheep.—Granary.—English Horses.—Hunting.—Peasants.—Peasant Cottages at Z——.—Arrangement—Furniture—Plenty and Comfort.—Contrast with other Villages.—Former State of Peasantry.—Urbarium of Maria Theresa.—Improved Urbarium of 1835.—Peasants not Serfs.—Evil Effects of present System.—Similarity of Urbarial Tenure to English Copyhold.—Grievances of the Peasantry.—Prospect of Improvement.

An invitation to spend a few days with Count S—— at Z——, a village at some distance from Pest, besides laying open to us something of the economy of country life in Hungary in its best state, led us to make inquiries into the condition of the peasantry, which corrected many erroneous opinions on that subject which we had previously entertained.

I need not describe the house and establishment of Z——; suffice it to say, that it was such as befitted a man of high rank and large fortune, whose tastes had been improved by foreign travel, but who did not on that account despise what was good in the habits and manners of his own country. Improvements in agriculture, the interests of his tenantry, politics, county business, and the sports of the field, divide the country gentleman's time in Hungary much as they do with us. Our host had been of late occupied in effecting a separation of his own land from that of his peasants; for while they cultivated in common, as is the system in many parts of Hungary, he found it impossible to carry out any improvements on his own portion, or to induce them to co-operate with him. To effect this in peace, he had offered them the choice of the best parts of the estate, if they would only leave him his portion in one mass; and he had at last succeeded in obtaining his object.

He had then introduced a better system of husbandry, and had planted some thousand mulberry-trees in different parts of his estate for the feeding of silk-worms. Though quite in its infancy,

we found a very intelligent Italian at the head of the silk-growing, which promises ere long to be an important and lucrative undertaking. This year they had collected about sixty pounds of silk worth 20*s*. the pound.

The steward showed us over the farm-yard, where we found a large flock of Merino sheep, collected in hovels to protect them from the heat of the mid-day sun. The entire flock amounted to about twenty thousand, of course scattered over different estates. At the present moment this is the most profitable branch of agricultural industry; it requires little labour, the produce is certain of sale, and it pays no duty on exportation. The ordinary medium price is 100 *f. c. m.* per centner,* or about 10*l*. per cwt.; though it fell in 1837 to the half. The very first sorts sell at nearly double that price.

The chief danger in the cultivation of the Merinos is from disease, caused by unhealthy or over feeding. On very rich pastures they allow them to graze only a few hours each day. During the four winter months they are kept entirely under cover, where the temperature is accurately regulated by the thermometer; and are fed on dry food, consisting of corn, straw, potatoes, and dried leaves; the latter being found a cheap and good substitute for hay. Nothing can be more miserable in appearance than the Merino sheep; every other point is sacrificed to the wool. The flesh is said to be coarse; indeed, all mutton is held in such low esteem here that it is difficult to get it.

At one end of the farm-yard was a huge granary of many stories high, and capable of containing vast stores of corn. This is said to be a source of great profit here; for, from the reckless extravagance of the peasantry, and the necessitous state of a great part of the nobility, the rise of prices in spring is always greater than in other countries, where a more regular commerce and more prudent habits provide against such exigencies.

Our host was a great admirer of England, and had acquired many of our tastes, as his establishment sufficiently manifested; but there are so many of the present generation in Hungary who show the same inclination, that he can scarcely be regarded as an exception. In the stables we found six or seven English blood-mares, and several running-horses, under the management of a first-rate English trainer. One colt, bred in Hungary, and

* The centner of Hungary contains one hundred Hungarian pounds, or one hundred and twenty-five pounds avoirdupois; and, therefore, when I use the cwt. for the centner, it is only a rude approximation.

already a winner at Pest and Vienna, was very promising. He stood sixteen hands at least, was lengthy in the quarter, clean and strong in the bone, in fact, a racer all over.

From the stables we adjourned to the kennels, where we found eight couple of young harriers, besides a brace or two of pointers. Count S—— had formerly a pack of fox-hounds; but the woods are so extensive, and a large bog so near, that the foxes almost always took refuge in the one or the other. The length of the winter, too, which commonly lasts four months, is a great impediment to hunting; but, in spite of this, two subscription packs are kept,—one at Parendorf, near the north end of the Neusiedler Lake, and another at Fót, near Pest. I heard that one might almost fancy one's self in Leicestershire, when among the smart English grooms, top-boots, and scarlet coats, which are exhibited at a throw-off in the neighbourhood of Pest; but, alas! the large enclosures and the springy turf are wanting; and, though the sands are tolerably sound galloping ground, bogs and woods are very awkward interruptions. For the rest, Count S—— has good sporting on his own estates. His woods are well stocked with pheasants, hares, and rabbits, and at certain seasons of the year with woodcocks; his corn-fields with partridge and quail; and the bogs with hosts of duck and snipe. I think I hear an old English squire exclaim, "Hem! I do believe a man might live in Hungary."

Count S—— now took us to see what gave him more pleasure, and of which he was evidently more proud, than of house, horses, or dogs: I mean his Magyar peasants.

Like most of my countrymen, when I first entered Hungary, I had some indistinct idea of a degrading serfage on the one side, and oppressive seigneurial rights on the other, as the relative position of landlord and tenant in this country; and, as a natural consequence, I had expected to find among the peasants nothing but misery, attended by the most abject submission or stifled hate. What I had already seen had tended a good deal to shake these first opinions; and as we walked up the wide street of the village of Z——, with its row of whitewashed cottages on either side, shaded by an avenue of acacias and walnuts, it was impossible to observe the comfortable appearance of every thing around us without feeling convinced that I had been in error, though to what extent I could not tell. All I had lately heard, too, of the sacrifices which a noble was obliged to make to obtain possession of his own land, though I did not quite understand it, seemed to

imply the existence of rights on the part of the peasantry which I certainly had not expected. But then, again, the very conversation I was listening to confirmed my former notions. The Count was detailing to us a host of oppressive laws and civil disadvantages under which the peasantry laboured, and the improvements which he hoped new laws and more extended rights would introduce among them; so that when he stopped at the first door we came to,—that of a poor widow,—I was positively startled at the kindly feelings with which he was received, and the appearances of comfort which every where met my eye. The widow was poor, for she had lost her husband and her sons,—all except one, who was a soldier: and she had none, therefore, to aid her to till her little farm. But yet nothing like want was apparent in any part of her arrangements; and her heart was glad, for the Count had succeeded in obtaining the young hussar's discharge, and the mother's gratitude was warmly and affectionately expressed. From thence we crossed the street to the house of an opposite neighbour, a stout middle-aged man, and one of the richest peasants in the village. Joy sparkled in the good man's face as he doffed his broad-brimmed hat, smoothed down his long black hair, and kissed his master's hand, in delight to see him in his cottage. Nor must the English reader imagine that kissing the hand is a servile salutation; in Hungary, even the grown-up child always uses it to a parent; and, among the old-fashioned, it is still the customary compliment from a gentleman to a lady.

A number of cottages were entered, chosen as we pleased, or as chance directed; and, except some slight variations, the same aspect of comfort and plenty was presented by all. The cottage of the Hungarian peasant is, for the most part, a long one-storied building, presenting a gable only to the street, with an enclosed yard facing the whole length of the building. The gable end is generally pierced by two small windows—or rather peep-holes, for they are very rarely more than a foot square—below which is a rustic seat overshadowed by a tree. The yard is separated from the street, sometimes by a handsome double gateway and stately wall; sometimes by a neat fence formed of reeds or of the straw of the maize; and sometimes by a broken hedge, presenting that dilapidated state of half freedom, half restraint, in which pigs and children so much delight, where they can at once enjoy liberty and set at naught control.

Passing through the gateway of one of these cottages, we

entered the first door, which led into the kitchen; on either side of which was a good sized dwelling-room. The kitchen, white-washed like the rest of the house, was itself small, and almost entirely occupied by a hearth four feet high, on which was blazing a wood fire, with preparations for the evening meal. The room to the left, with the two little peep-holes to the street, was evidently the best room of the cottage, for it was that into which the peasant was most anxious to show us.

In one corner was a wooden seat fixed to the wall, and before it an oaken table, so solid, that it seemed fixed there too; on the opposite side stood the large earthenware stove; while a third corner was occupied by a curious phenomenon,—a low bedstead heaped up to the ceiling with feather-beds. The use of this piece of furniture completely puzzled us—to sleep on it was impossible; and we were obliged to refer to the Count for an explanation, who assured us it was an article of luxury on which the Hungarian peasant prided himself highly. For sleeping, he prefers to lay his hard mattress on the wooden bench, or even on the floor; but, like other people who think themselves wiser, an exhibition of profuse expenditure in articles of luxury—feather beds are his fancy—flatters his vanity. These beds are generally a part of his wife's dowry.

In the favourite corner we commonly observed—for the peasants of Z—— are Catholics—a gilded crucifix, or a rudely-coloured *Mater dolorosa*, the *penates* of the family; while all round hung a goodly array of pots and pans, a modest mirror, perhaps even a painted set of coffee-cups, and, sometimes, a drinking-glass of curious workmanship and of no ordinary dimensions. A Protestant peasant supplies the place of saints and virgins by heads of Kaizer Franzel and Prince Schwartzenberg; and, not unfrequently, Bonaparte and Wellington look terrible things at each other across the room.

The corresponding apartment on the other side of the kitchen was furnished with more ordinary benches and tables, and served for the common eating and sleeping-room of the family. Beyond this, but still under the same roof, was a store-room and dairy; and below it a cellar. The store-room well deserved its name; for such quantities of *turo* (a kind of cheese,) lard, fruits, dried herbs, and pickles laid up for winter use, I never saw; and in some houses the cellar was not less plentifully supplied, and that, too, with a very tolerable wine. The cow-house was rarely without one or two tenants; the stable boasted a pair, or

sometimes four horses; the pig-sties, it is true, were empty, but only because the pigs had not yet returned from the stubble-fields; and to these most of the houses added sheep-sheds and poultry-pens,—presenting altogether, perhaps, as good a picture of a rich and prosperous peasantry as one could find in any part of the world.

The appearance of the peasant himself might perhaps, strike a stranger's eye as somewhat rude. The fashion of his dress is uncouth, and its material is coarse; his hair hangs in braids or flowing locks upon his shoulders; and his huge hat throws a deeper shade over his swarthy features; but speak to him, does he answer you with fear or rudeness? His strange costume, is it ill adapted to the climate of the country? Are there no signs of care and neatness in its adjustment? Does not that elaborate embroidery on his fringed trowsers, and the gay lace on his jacket, tell of personal care, and a taste for harmless luxury? And do not these show that the man is neither a pauper nor a slave? Such appearances, it is true, are strange to our eyes; but let us not mistake them for signs of barbarism, lest others condemn us as ignorant for doing so.

Often did our surprise break out, as not one, but every cottage, presented in its turn the same picture of plenty and comfort; nor could I help exclaiming, "If such be the state to which bad laws have brought the peasants of Hungary, for mercy's sake, my dear Count, do not attempt to alter them! Would that our envied land could see all her children in the enjoyment of such abundance!"

"Be not too hasty in your judgment," said Count S——; "what you see here is obtained in despite of bad laws, not in consequence of them; before you leave the country you will probably see enough to convince you of the existence of more than a fair share of poverty and misery among our peasantry: besides, you forget that these men are the cultivators of the soil, and with you would become wealthy farmers, bestowing a good education on their children, and bringing them up to reputable trades and professions."

Nor, as I afterwards learned, was the state of the peasantry at Z—— merely the effect of the laws they lived under. Their position has many advantages. The soil they cultivate yields abundantly; a market and means of transport for any excess of production is near at hand; the village school has given to almost

all the first elements of education; they have been blessed for generations with wise and just masters; and they are now reaping the advantages of some useful reforms which Count S—— has himself introduced among them.

It would be easy to find a contrast to this. Take G——, a small village in the north of Hungary, difficult of access from the bad roads in the neighbourhood, and not favoured by nature with the richest of soils. The peasants love the brandy-bottle, and hate their landlord. The Baron B—— lives in Vienna, and lets his village to a greedy Jew, who grinds out of the people every particle of possible profit, no matter how injurious ultimately such conduct may prove to them or to their master. The dingy cottages are built of unhewn firs, carelessly put together, and plastered with mud on the inside; they rarely consist of more than two, and generally only of one chamber, where the whole family must live. Attached to the house is a shed for the oxen and pigs; horses and sheep they have none. I must confess, I cannot speak so minutely of the interior of the cottages here as at Z——, for, in going towards one of them, I stepped up to the knees in a mess of putrefying hemp; which, with the filthy appearance of the children crowding the threshold, effectually cooled my curiosity.

Such are the varieties to be found among the Hungarian peasantry; nor have I in Z—— or G—— chosen exaggerated instances of either class. I could have cited the peasant, whose proud and haughty bearing bespeak the feelings of the *millionnaire,** whose flocks of a thousand sheep and whose herds of snow-white oxen cover the plains; I could have taken the miserable wretch whose hut scarce protects him from the winter's frost, and whose one half-starved cow suffices to till the small plot of barren soil to which a hard fate has attached him; but I have preferred a medium, which I think any Hungarian traveller will recognise as just.

Without stopping to analyze the causes of these varieties,—among which might probably figure the nature of the soil, the facility of communion, the religion of the people, and, above all, the character and conduct of the landlord himself,—I cannot quit the subject without some notice of the laws by which the pea-

* I believe Count Károly may boast the richest peasants in Hungary. Not long since, two of his villages purchased their entire freedom; that is, compounded for ever their personal service for a fixed annual tax, payable in money.

sants have hitherto been affected, and the changes which of late have been introduced into them; for I believe it is in this way many of the faults and vices by which they are distinguished can be best explained, and I am convinced that it is only by an improved legislation that these can be radically cured.

It was not till 1405 that the Hungarian peasant seems to have had a recognised civil existence. In that year it was first declared that the peasant should have the power to leave the place where he was born, in case he could obtain his lord's consent; which consent, however, it was provided, should not be arbitrarily refused.

It must not be imagined that, because this was the first legal notice of the peasant's existence, he had formerly been treated as a mere slave. Slavery had been, in fact, abolished on the introduction of Christianity. Accustomed to the omnipotence of the law in our own country and times, we allow too little for the natural feelings of justice, the influence of fear, or respect for the common observances of society, in ages when that greatest barrier against wrong was wanting. If not law, custom had given the Hungarian peasant certain rights which could not be infringed with impunity; and, besides, it was the lord's interest—"*ne omnis rusticitas, sine quâ nobilitas parum valet, deleatur,*" as the preamble to an old act quaintly expresses it,—not to treat him with too great severity.

No other material change in the condition of the peasantry took place till the commencement of the sixteenth century, when the nobles, irritated by the excesses committed during a servile insurrection under Dosa, revenged themselves by reducing the whole peasantry to absolute serfage, "that future generations might learn how great a crime it was for the peasant to rebel against his lord."*

Too great a severity defeats its own object; and it was soon found impossible to maintain this cruel enactment in its full vigour. It was repealed in 1547, again re-enacted in 1548, and a second time modified in 1556; but it was not till towards the end of the last century that the rights of the peasant were placed on a firm basis.

In the Diet of 1764, the third and last held under Maria The-

* After the insurrection of Wat Tyler, Richard addressed the peasants of Essex, "*Rustici quidem fuistis et estis, in bondageo permanebitis, non ut hactenus, sed incomparabiliter viliori.*"—HALLAM's Middle Ages, vol. iii. p. 268.

resa, the grievances of the peasants were most strongly urged on the attention of the nobles, but no ameliorations were obtained: occupied with their own affairs, those of the weaker classes were delayed to some future period. The next year, the natural consequences of the agitation of such a question, without any step being made towards its solution, were manifested in a rising of the discontented peasantry in several parts of the country, and in the commission of the usual outrages before the forces of the Government could allay the ferment. Taking advantage of the alarm which these excesses had impressed upon the public mind, the great queen determined, by an act of arbitrary power, herself to apply the remedy to so crying an evil; an act which, if it cannot be defended as strictly constitutional, will never want apologists among the friends of humanity.

The result of this determination was the celebrated Urbarium of Maria Theresa, the Magna Charta of the Hungarian peasantry. Partly a formal recognition of established customs, partly a grant of new rights, the importance of which was not at first perceived, this Urbarium, though unsanctioned by the Diet, became virtually, and almost without opposition, the law of the land. After the death of Joseph, when the Diet was again called together, it was adopted provisionally till a more perfect one could be framed, and so continued till 1835.

One of the chief grievances of the peasantry in the time of Maria Theresa was the heavy taxation to which, for some years, they had been subject, and for which the almost constant wars in which the empire was engaged during this reign was a sufficient reason. The new Urbarium did not propose to lessen this burden; but under the plea of rendering its pressure less irksome, and at the same time to defend the peasant against the oppression of his lord, it declared him not only at liberty to quit his land when he chose, but conferred on him the right to retain it as long as he pleased on the fulfilment of certain conditions. To enable him to support the taxation, he was endowed with a kind of joint property in the soil.*

By this master-stroke of policy, one half† of the land in Hun-

* This principle had been announced by the predecessors of Maria Theresa in 1728, when it had met with the strongest opposition; but it was now allowed to pass without a remark.

† Probably much more than one half is thus taxed and given (so to speak) to the peasants; for in many villages the whole land is in peasants' portions, and the only income to be derived from it by the landlord is a

gary was rendered for ever taxable. It is known to the reader that the Hungarian noble pays no direct taxes, and that before this Urbarium the peasant had no right in the land; so that had it pleased the noble, he could at any time—not, indeed, have prevented the peasant paying tax, but—have deprived him of the power of doing so by retaking the farm into his own occupation. The case, however, was now altered. It was simply declared that the landlord could not deprive the tenant of his land, and that the latter could bequeath it (or its usufruct, to be verbally correct) to his children; so that in fact it became partially his property, subject only to certain conditions and restrictions of right. The vast importance of this change we shall see hereafter.

The relative rights and obligations of the peasant and his lord, as laid down in the Urbarium of Maria Theresa, stood pretty much thus:—

1st. The peasant was no more attached to the soil, but could leave his farm and landlord whenever he thought fit, having first given due notice to the magistrate and paid his debts.

2nd. An entire peasant's fief consisted of a house and garden-ground to the extent of one acre; of an arable and pasture farm,—varying in different counties, and according to the qualities of the soil,*—from sixteen to forty acres of arable, and from about six to twelve of meadow land.

3rd. The landlord† could only dispossess the peasant—nor that without due process of law—in case he had absolute need of the land to build his own house on,‡ or in case of incapacity or refusal on the part of the peasant to fulfil his duties, or of his condemnation for heinous offence; nor could the landlord exchange the fief without giving another equally large and good.

tenth of the produce and the labour. In fact, the nobles will one day find out that they have much less landed property than they fancy; albeit far more than they know what to do with.

* There are four classes of land, divided according to its qualities, in each of which the quantity appertaining to an entire fief is different; and each class differs in almost every county, according to the population, value of land, cost of labour, &c.

† I use the word landlord, as that most directly answering to the *Grund Herr* of the Germans, the *dominus terrestris* of Hungarian Latin.

‡ I have stated elsewhere, that the youngest son has the right of retaining the paternal mansion; and the privilege above-mentioned was therefore extended to the elder sons, who might otherwise be left without a dwelling-place.

4th. When there were vineyards, the peasant might retail wines from Michaelmas to St. George's Day; where there were none, to Christmas only.*

The peasant might cut wood for building and firing, and gather rushes on the property of his landlord without payment.

Soc mill, or the obligation to grind at the lord's mill, was forbidden; as likewise all other demands than those specified by this law.

The peasant held this property, for such it really was, subject to the following conditions:—

1st. The holder of an entire fief was bound to labour for his landlord, in every year, one hundred and four days, or if he brought a team of oxen or horses, fifty-two, from sun-rise to sunset. This time it was required should be taken in one or two days weekly, as it might be, except during harvest, when it might be doubled for a certain time, though not increased in the gross amount; and, moreover, one quarter of the labour was to be reckoned in the three winter months.

2nd. In like manner, the holder of half a fief performed half the quantity of service; and the holder of a quarter, only a fourth: a mere house-holder rendered only eighteen days' hand labour.

3rd. Every four holders of entire fiefs were obliged, once yearly, to furnish a man and horse for a two days' journey,† the landlord paying the necessary expenses.

4th. Each peasant, for the liberty of cutting wood, was obliged to cut and convey to his landlord's dwelling one small cart-load of fire-wood.

5th. When the country was infested by beasts of prey (bears, boars, wolves, and foxes,) the peasant was to assist in hunting three days, if required, in the course of the year.

6th. For his house, he paid two shillings yearly.

7th. Every fief was bound to pay yearly two hens, two capons, nineteen eggs, and one pound of butter, or eighteen pence; and every thirty fiefs together, one calf or three shillings in money.

8th. Should the lord or lady marry, or enter into any religious order, the peasant was obliged to make a present similar to the contribution in the former clause; and the same if the lord was taken in battle and forced to ransom himself.

* Retailing wine, as well as baking bread, grinding corn, killing meat, and distilling spirits, are rights of the lord.

† Where there was no post, this was the means used for sending letters.

9th. For permission to distil, the peasant paid four shillings yearly for each still.

10th. Of all the productions of the soil, one ninth belonged to the landlord, except the produce of the second harvest, and the fruits of the garden. Of cattle, lambs, and kids, a ninth was also the lord's due.

In order to enforce prompt obedience to these laws, the seigneur was empowered to inflict summary punishment on the refractory peasants, by means of his officers, to the amount of twenty-five blows; for which, however, he was amenable to the laws if it was inflicted without due cause.

The *Sedes Dominalis*,—the Manor Court,—in which the lord or his representatives appointed the judges, was declared the legal tribunal for the settlement of differences between the peasant and his lord, as well as of those that might arise among the peasants themselves. There was a right of appeal to the County Court, and from that to the *Statthalterei* in Buda. In civil matters, the jurisdiction extended to all cases under the value of six pounds; in criminal, to the infliction of twenty-five blows.

This has always been considered by foreigners a very gross injustice; but, when the cause has been between peasant and peasant, I doubt if it has been felt to be so. I have seen the system in action, and have often admired it as a cheap, speedy, and satisfactory mode of administering justice. In quarrels between two peasants, nothing can be more natural than that they should refer to their landlord, who has both their interests at heart,—for, be it recollected, if the peasant is poor, the landlord soon becomes so too,—to settle it for them; and it is but rarely he is not able to arrange it to their mutual satisfaction.

Where the landlord is himself a party interested in the process, the matter, however, assumes another character. Some Hungarian writers have alleged that the seigneurial right resolved itself into a simple refusal of the plaintiff's claim, which was of course referred to another tribunal, the County Court; that, in fact, the whole affair was little more than the serving a notice of action.

There was this important difference, however; the right of appeal is undoubted, but it was what the Hungarian law-books call "*extra dominium*," without, in the meantime, arresting the execution of the first judgment; so that, if the refractory peasant had received his five-and-twenty blows, he might appeal against its injustice, but his master's cruelty had nevertheless enjoyed its savage indulgence.

If the County Courts, composed of magistrates, themselves nobles, might be supposed to have favoured the noble, the Court of Buda, the court of last resort, has never been accused of such a tendency; nay, in its desire to protect the weak, it has been often thought to have done injustice to the strong. In fact, it must never be forgotten that it has been the interest of the Crown to protect the peasant, because the peasant alone pays the taxes.

Such has been the law of the landlord and tenant for the last three quarters of a century in Hungary. In the Diet of 1835, the Crown again proposed the question to the States, and a new law was passed.

The spirit in which the new Urbarium is conceived may be imagined from the avowed principle, *that, where it was safe and proper, the rights of the peasant should be increased, and his burdens diminished; but in no instance should his privileges, however attained, be curtailed.* The small tithes, often a subject of vexatious oppression, were abolished, as well as gifts on extraordinary occasions. The long journeys, by which the peasants' cattle were injured, were given up. A number of other minor enactments were added, all in the same spirit; and many of them rendered necessary, rather by the ingenuity of the dishonest, who found out a thousand ways of eluding the intentions of the legislator, than by any fault in the laws themselves.

Almost the only advantage gained by the landlord from the recent changes has been the establishment of his right to separate his land from that of his peasants, and to have it all in one piece. In many cases this has excited the greatest irritation among the peasantry, who are exceedingly suspicious of change; and in one or two instances serious riots have taken place in consequence.

But the changes really most important are those which tend to confer on the peasant a right of property to the land he holds, and which more distinctly fix the liability to taxation on the property, and not on the individual or class. The power of removing a peasant is rendered more difficult. The peasant is declared henceforth to have the right of *buying and selling the investitures, ameliorations, together with the right of enjoyment* of peasants' fiefs; the right, however, being hampered and restricted in various ways. In the absence of heirs-at-law,—if he has children, it is divided among them just as with the property of nobles,—he has the right to dispose freely of his property by will. The more important of these restrictions have in view an

object humane in itself, but it is easy to foresee that they will have a contrary effect to that designed; and, like all legal measures intended to establish an artificial check on the operation of natural causes as regards the disposition of property, must eventually yield to the wants of a progressing society.

Since the passing of this law, it can scarcely be said any longer that the peasant alone pays taxes; for it is especially provided, that, should a noble purchase a peasant's fief he is not only liable to all the labour and payments of the landlord, but also to all the taxes of Government, county rates, &c.

In his judicial character the landlord is much more restricted than formerly; he can no longer inflict on the refractory peasant any corporeal punishment, and the only summary means left in his power of enforcing obedience to his orders is imprisonment from one to three days, he being obliged to support the prisoner during that time.* The jurisdiction of the *Sedes Dominalis* has been restricted to cases between peasant and peasant, those between the peasant and his lord are from henceforth to be decided by the *Sedes Dominalis Urbarialis;* a new court, composed of five disinterested persons, among whom must figure the magistrate of the district, and one of his sworn men, the rest being named by the landlord, but the landlord himself, and his officers, are absolutely excluded. All the numerous disputes arising from the peculiar relation in which landlord and tenant stand to each other,—as, oppressive exactions and unwarranted ejectments, illegal judgments, and bodily injuries, on the one side; or on the other, refusal to labour, the nonpayment of dues, wilful destruction of property, or personal insult,—are decided by this tribunal; which assembles on notice being given in the village itself where the offence has been committed, and proceeds by a verbal or written process to take cognizance of the matter. The right of appeal remains as before, though it will probably be much less frequently employed.

I have entered thus at length into the laws affecting the Hungarian peasantry, especially those which regulate their intercourse with their lords; because I have been anxious to show that they are not, as strangers commonly suppose, serfs, nor their lords tyrants, with unlimited power over their lives and fortunes.

* As long as the system of paying rent in labour continues, it is absolutely necessary that the landlord should have a summary power of enforcing it: a strong reason for changing the system.

The rights of each are accurately defined, and a cheap and easy process exists for obtaining justice on either side. The rent paid by the peasant in labour and produce, instead of cash, is exceedingly small; and he is endowed with a right in the property, inconsistent even with our notions of the landlord's just claims. It is evident enough, then, that the Hungarian peasant is no serf—that the laws give him rights fixed and determinate; but it is yet a question whether they have all been wisely conceived.

I believe that many of these laws have an injurious effect on the character of the peasantry. The system of rent by *robot* or forced labour,—that is, so many days' labour without any specification of the quantity of work to be performed,—is a direct premium on idleness. A landlord wishes a field of corn to be cut; his steward sends out, by means of his Haiduks, information to the peasants to meet at such a field at such an hour with their sickles. Some time after the hour appointed a great part of them arrive, the rest finding some excuse by which they hope to escape a day's work; while others send their children or their wives, declaring some reasons for their own absence. After much arranging they at last get to work; a Haiduk stands over them to see that they do not go to sleep, and between talking, laughing, and resting, they do get something done. Where horses are employed, they are still less inclined to hurry; lest they should tire them for the next day, when they use them for their own purposes.

Now how much does the reader suppose such workmen perform in one day? Count S—— says, just one-third of what the same men can do easily when working by the piece; and he has accordingly compounded his peasants' one hundred and four days' robot for a certain amount of labour, which they generally get through in about thirty-four days.

Another evil of the robot is the ill-will it begets between the masters and the workmen; their whole lives seem to be a constant effort, on the one hand, to see how much can be pressed out of the reluctant peasant; and, on the other, how little can be done to satisfy the terms of agreement, and escape punishment. Mutual injury becomes a mutual profit; suspicion and ill-will are the natural results.

The restrictions on the sale of peasants' fiefs, to which I before alluded, though evidently well meant, are equally injurious in their tendency. They exclude from purchasing peasants' fiefs

the lord of the manor, or landlord, other nobles possessing parts of the same village, and the community or parish *in corpore:* while, in villages of forty entire fiefs, no one can purchase more than one fief; or, in those of eighty, two; or, in those of one hundred and twenty, three; and, even in the largest, four is the greatest number allowed to one person. The object is evidently to prevent the greedy speculator, the overbearing landlord, or even the saving industrious peasant, from grasping in his own power the whole property of a village, and thus reducing an independent peasantry to the state of tenants at will. Without pausing to examine whether the system of tenants at will does not produce greater happiness, as well as greater plenty, than that of independent holders, it is easy to see that these restrictions injure the peasant himself. In lessening the number of purchasers, they rob him of the value of his land; by refusing him unlimited right of purchase in the same place, they check his industry and prevent his rising to a higher station; while, by confining his farm to so small a size, improvement in agriculture becomes almost impossible.

Nor have they a less direct tendency to keep the whole body in a state of indolence. When one case of idleness is supported by the law, independently of any personal efforts, the example of course influences a whole neighbourhood; whereas were idleness followed by want and misery, and did industry unrestricted lead to wealth and independence, these effects would be most extensively felt. One peasant, become rich and independent from his own industry, would make fifty such. But this is one out of many instances we shall meet with of the results of that paternal affection, which takes care that its children shall not take care for themselves.

The present state of the Hungarian peasantry, and the tenure by which they hold their land, have a particular interest for the English reader, as they illustrate the origin of some obscure rights and customs in his own laws. I have been forcibly struck with some of these; and, if I blunder occasionally in attempting to indicate them, the learned reader must pardon the errors of a non-professional annotator on so knotty a subject.

All landed property in England is either freehold or copyhold; that is, either what was originally held by a *homo liber* (the noble of Hungary,) and constituting a freehold, *liberum tenementum*,—or let by him to a *villein*, or peasant, on consideration of certain services, for which he held, as a title-deed, a *copy*

of the entry in the manor roll, hence called *copyhold;* in other words, the *fundus dominalis* and *fundus colonicalis* of the Hungarian Urbarium. The very mode of conveying peasants' fiefs is similar to that practised with respect to copyhold. They are transferred by a simple writing, one copy of which remains with the lord of the village.

Now how similar were the states of society which gave rise to these analogous laws!

In some of our old copyholds,* still preserved in their original form, the services to be performed are servile: in one case the holder must reap the lord's corn, in another he must repair his fences; in some cases it is especially provided that the lord shall find the copyholders in meat and drink; and, in an old Scottish tenure, the lord binds himself to pay the piper as long as the villeins work. The resemblance in this last point is most extraordinarily maintained,—the Wallack peasantry of Transylvania will not work without a bagpiper; and, I am sure, were they to commute their days of labour for so much work, they would contract for meat and drink, and bagpipes too.

We have in England some tenures, equally curious, by which a certain number of fat geese must be delivered at Michaelmas; and, in like manner, in some parts of Transylvania the tenants are bound to furnish a certain number of aigrettes' or herons' plumes, and martens' furs, as yearly rent. The only difference in the two cases is this, that with us no Urbarium ever existed, every thing was left to private agreement; accordingly it took from the Conquest to the time of Elizabeth to do away with absolute villeinage:† while, in Hungary, by one sweeping law, the nobles gave up their exclusive right over one half the land of the country, retaining only certain privileges which we have enumerated. As we shall show by and by, it requires but one simple law permitting, not enforcing—for that I hold to be unjust and imprudent—contracts, commuting personal service for a fixed tax, and the Hungarian peasant slides gradually into the English copyholder. I need not say to the English reader, that, for the most part, copyhold is now just as good as freehold.

* These have been for the most part commuted for payment of money-fines at certain periods, mere nominal services, &c.; and though the lord has still the right to reclaim in theory, it has been generally allowed to fall into disuse.

† Absolute villeinage, or serfage, has not existed in Hungary for several centuries.

The theory still remains that they hold at the lord's will, but it is a complete fiction.

Our manorial rights, which still exist, and which always go with the *Hall,—Curia Dominalis,*—are the sole remains of seigneurial power in England:—would that the *Jura Domini Terrestris* of Hungary had become equally innocent! But enough of law.

Should these pages meet the eye of some philanthropic Hungarian, he may think that I have spoken too leniently of the conduct of the nobles to their peasantry, and found too much good in the peasants' condition. He would be mistaken, however; I both know and appreciate their wrongs. But he must recollect that I am writing for those who have hitherto believed them serfs. This is an opinion for which we Englishmen are not altogether to blame; for, in addition to our ignorance of Hungary, and our aptitude to compare it with Poland and Russia, the error is often fostered by the silly vanity with which some Hungarians themselves speak of their *subjects* and their *vassals;* forgetting that, instead of impressing a foreigner with an admiration of their greatness, such remarks only fill him with disgust at their injustice. What renders it still worse is, that this language is sometimes used by men who talk loudly of the oppressions they suffer from Austria,—of attacks on their rights and privileges: they may talk long enough on such matters before they excite the sympathy of an Englishman, when they utter in the same breath complaints of the disobedience and insubordination of their own *vassals!*

No! Hungarian peasants are not vassals; but Heaven knows they have even still enough of injustice to complain of!

It is rare indeed that the poor, the ignorant, and the weak, do not suffer from the oppression of the strong; but in Hungary they have more than their share of the sufferings which ordinarily fall to the lot of humanity. Well might a Diet of the olden times exclaim, "Nulla res magis florenti quondam Hungariæ statui nocuisse videtur oppressione colonorum, quorum clamor ascendit jugiter ante conspectum Dei;" and that cry will still be heard at the throne of eternal justice.

I know well that the burdens of the Hungarian peasant are hard, and beyond all measure of justice. I know that, besides the dues he owes his landlord, he pays a tenth to the church, to the government a head-tax and property-tax, and to the municipality (besides his labour in the repair of roads and bridges, and

the toll in crossing them) a heavy impost for the administration of justice, the municipal government, the maintenance of public buildings, and also, the greater part of the burden of supporting an army of sixty thousand men. I know that the soldier is quartered upon the peasant; and that, besides giving up half his cottage for his accommodation, he is obliged, for one kreutzer (something less than a halfpenny) a day, to furnish him with fire, cooking, stable-room, and fodder,—not to mention the peculations and impertinences of which he dare neither complain nor avenge himself. I know that, in addition to this, he is obliged to sell his corn and hay at a fixed price for the use of the troops; and that, as this price was fixed many years ago, it is now generally below the market average, and in some years is only one-eighth of what would be obtained by a fair sale.

I know that, thus bearing all the burdens of the state, the poor peasant enjoys but few of its privileges. It is true, that it is difficult to deprive him of his farm, for in that government protects him, for the sake of the tax it obtains from him; that his complaints against his seigneur are often listened to with a willling ear, and for that also there is a reason which it is easy to divine; that, by industry, he can generally obtain more than is absolutely necessary to supply the demands of nature; and, in short, that were he to be reduced to that state of brutalism which some rulers think the *ne plus ultra* of human perfectibility in those they govern, he would be no doubt a happy creature. But, thank God! the worst efforts of the worst rulers have not been able to crush all that is noble and great in man. I know that the Hungarian peasant feels that he is oppressed; and, if justice be not speedily rendered him, I fear much that he will wrest it —perhaps somewhat rudely too—from the trembling grasp of the factitious power which has so long withheld it from him.

Nor do I forget that the Hungarian peasant is entirely excluded from all political power; that an artificial barrier, which no exertions of his own can enable him to pass, prevents the possibility of his aspiring to it; that he can only hold landed property under servile and degrading restrictions; that he can never hope to rise higher than the situation in which he is born; that he is not equal with the noble before the law; that he is liable to the infliction of imprisonment, and, till the last Diet, of corporeal punishment also, without fair trial; and that, in all disputes with the noble, he is subject to the jurisdiction of those whose natural sympathies incline them to favour his adversary. I do not forget that

he is thus deprived of the two feelings most sacred to a freeman, and the most carefully protected by a good government,—a sense of personal security, and a confidence in the fair administration of justice: but I know that this is still far removed from vassalage; and when I look round the world, and would mark the spot where the poor and weak are not oppressed, alas! I find it not.

But, in Hungary, I see prospects of better things to come. A great change has been begun, from which it is impossible any longer to recede; and, if it be conducted wisely, I see a happy and glorious future for Hungary as the consequence. I see the nobles contented and wealthy; I see the Government strong and feared abroad, because loved and respected at home; I see from the Hungarian peasants arise the future yeomen, the free possessors of the soil, the electors, the jurymen, the militiamen —the citizens in the noblest sense of the word, the bulwarks of their country in war, the guardians of her liberties in peace. It remains to consider how this vision will be accomplished.

I have already said that the act of the last Diet would eventually change the whole aspect of society in Hungary: the nobles showed by that act a spirit of self-sacrifice worthy of all praise; little more is needed. The most simple remedy for existing evils is this: let every peasant holding land be allowed to purchase a commutation of his services, tithes, and other obligations, either by a permanent tax or by a sum of ready money: let this confer on him not only free possession of the land, but entire independence of his lord: including, of course, independence of the Seigneurial Court,—for, as he would then have no duties towards his lord, his lord could have no longer any claim on him. Let every holder of an entire fief, thus enfranchised, become a member of the municipal and political body,—his stake in the country is surely sufficient, and his qualification depends on his property. The peasant land would still remain subject to Government and municipal taxes, the enfranchised peasant would be equally liable to all the burdens of the state as the unenfranchised. Let Government encourage the peasantry on the *Kameral* (Exchequer) properties to purchase their enfranchisement by fixing a low scale of prices; the revenue would be the better for it, and the country could not complain.

If to this it be desired to unite the great political and national project of Magyarizing the whole country, it is only necessary to annex to the enjoyment of political and municipal rights the condition of a knowledge of the Magyar language. This would

be no hardship, for, as the law stands, all legal and political acts must be published in that tongue; and it is evident that no one can be fit to take a part in them who does not understand it. This would effect more towards Magyarizing Hungary than all the schools that can be established,—than all the coercive acts the Diet can pass. It would become every man's interest to learn Magyar; the knowledge of the language would be in itself a kind of patent of nobility,—the ignorance of it a badge of servitude. What father would refuse his child the means of acquiring such advantages, and at so cheap a rate?

Some such measures as these are all that are wanted.

Let the nobles gradually yield the vexatious rights of seigneury, which bring little profit to them, but do much injury to others; let them enable the peasant to purchase his freedom from service; grant him independent justice; as he acquires property, let him acquire consideration and rights; leave men and things to act as circumstances show to be best, untrammelled by restrictions, unaided by privilege; and the peasant of Hungary will soon occupy a position which may justly be envied by his fellows of any other part of Europe.

CHAPTER XII.

SCHEMNITZ AND THE MINES OF HUNGARY.

Waitzen Schlag-baum.—Bishop and Bigotry.—Deaf and Dumb School.—Austrian Financial Measures.—Tobacco.—Inn at Terény and Magyar Host.—Nemeti.—The Hack-bred.—Entrance to Schemnitz.—The Calvary Hill.—Legend of the Miner's Daughter.—Mines.—School of Mines.—Mining Students.—Visit to the Mines.—Roman Mines.—Method of Mining among the Romans.—Direction and Management of the Mines.—Pay of the Miners.—Joseph the Second's Adit.—Washing Mills.—Prince Coburg's House.—Magistrates of Schemnitz.—Impertinence of an Ober-notair.—The Castle.—The Dwarf and his Spurs.—The Haiduk's Roguery.

Our road from Pest to Schemnitz, the capital of the mining districts of Hungary, led us along the sandy banks of the Danube to Waitzen. As we crossed the small stream before entering the town, we had to wait till the *Schlag-baum*, a ponderous bar formed of a whole tree hung across the road for a toll-gate, was slowly raised to let us pass. An unfortunate little town that Waitzen is! Its ill-paved wide streets look poor, and contrast sadly with the rich episcopal palace, splendid church—built, they say, after a model of St. Peter's—and large convents, which tower high above the more modest dwellings of its citizens. In fact, the town is entirely the property and under the government of the bishop and chapter. Monopoly ruins its trade: the bishop interferes in every thing: he kindly fixes the price of wine, to ensure the sale of his own,—and I can answer for its dearness and badness. Now this Catholic bishop is of opinion that he may do what he will with his own, and accordingly he suffers none but true believers to dwell within his walls; the unfortunate Protestants being confined to the suburbs, and the Jews driven to a village at some distance, and allowed to enter the town only at certain stated times for trading. Oh intolerance! intolerance! no matter what thy nation or thy creed, thou art still the same relentless foe to freedom, meet it in what form thou mayest.

In rambling over the town, out of temper with the bishop and his bigotry, I fell in with another object, which excited my anti-

quarian ire against him not a little. The present, or some former occupant of the see, has collected a considerable number of Roman antiquities in Waitzen and its neighbourhood; and has placed them—can you guess where, reader? Perhaps you think in some public museum,—for there are such things in Hungary;—or in his library;—or, at least, in the town-house. No; he has built them into the outside of his garden-wall, just about a foot from the ground, where every little child can conveniently knock off a bit, and every passing wheel obliterate a line of Roman history! They are mostly monumental remains, with basso-relievos and inscriptions. One, of Mars descending to visit Venus, is not without spirit. There are several with figures of Hercules. Among the inscriptions are at least three, which, I think, refer to soldiers of the second legion. (*Mil. Leg. II. Af.*) A piece of frieze is elegant, though not in the purest taste. So much for Pannonian antiquities!

It was pleasant to turn from such objects as these to an institution which would do honour to any country or age,—a school for deaf and dumb children; first founded, I think, by Maria Theresa, and afterwards enriched by private contributions. Unfortunately the capital was not invested in land, and in consequence nearly the whole was lost when the great changes in the currency took place; and the institution was ruined, till the late Emperor restored it a few years since to something like its pristine state.

It now contains about fifty pupils, including the Jews, who are admitted to learn, but not to live in the house. Some of the children are on the foundation; others, whose parents are sufficiently rich, pay 12*l*. per annum for their board and education.

The professors were exceedingly polite, and showed me over the institution with the greatest readiness. The younger children were at work, and I saw their method of teaching them. They learn to write and read letters, to express them by signs on their fingers, and also to pronounce them, though of course imperfectly. They are instructed to associate the ideas of words, or certain combinations of letters, with things, by means of pictures; qualities of objects by comparison. How they are made to understand moral qualities I forgot to ask; but the professor assured me they had very correct notions on moral and religious subjects, and that it was a matter easily taught.

They learn to utter vowels by observing the form of the mouth of the teacher when he speaks; and consonants by the form of

the mouth, the action of the larynx, and the fórce with which the air passes out as the sound is uttered.

The usual time occupied in their education extends to six years; during which time the girls are taught to sew, and the boys to practise any trade they choose by which they can gain an independent subsistence. Of course there is a great difference in the relative facility with which they learn; one pretty, clever, little girl pointed out to me England and London on the map, and answered her questions with the greatest readiness. They have apparently less shyness than other children; probably because they are more kindly and rationally treated, for shyness has its origin in fear. As soon as they knew I was an Englishman, they flocked round me, and examined my dress and appearance with the greatest curiosity; and the professor assured me that I should for a long time serve as the dumb child's *idéal* of the people who lived on the island. They have curious signs for certain words: for instance, "Hungarian" is expressed by touching the upper lip, indicating a mustache; "German," by touching the knees, because the Austrian soldiers wear knee-breeches; "an Englishman," by imitating the action of scissors at the back of the head, because they say the English wear their hair cut short behind—a sign probably adopted before pig-tails were out of fashion in Austria.

While our horses are slowly dragging us up the long hill which leads from Waitzen, and as we pause to take a last look at the Danube we are now quitting for some time, I may as well tell you, reader, something of that *change in the currency*, as I delicately call it, to which in a former paragraph I alluded. During the long and unsuccessful wars which Austria waged for the cause of legitimacy, her treasures became exhausted, her resources dried up, and her credit quite ruined. To have redeemed herself from this position, but one honourable way was open;—to have called together the States, to have laid before them her distress, to have granted a redress of grievances, and to have demanded support from the interest and affection of her subjects. She preferred committing one of the greatest political crimes by which any government has ever dared to surrender itself to the execration of posterity. This was no less than the reduction of the value of paper-money successively from 100 to 20, and from 20 to 8!—so that a person possessing 100 florins in 1811, found himself in every part of the Austrian dominions, in 1813, worth just 8! When it is considered that all contracts, loans, trusts,

and debts were to be paid off with the same proportionate diminution, the reader may have some idea of the confusion and misery produced by this infamous act. That hospitals and public institutions, of which Government was the banker, should have been ruined, was a trifling inconvenience, compared to the blow inflicted on commerce, the destruction of public and private credit, and the insecurity which man felt towards man in the fulfilment of the most binding obligations. Had the spirit of evil sought by one act to demoralize a whole people, his ingenuity could scarcely have found a more happy means of accomplishing his object than this master-stroke of policy of the Austrian financier.

The road we were pursuing offered few objects to interest us: it is true, we passed the ruins of the two old castles of Neográd and Honth, but they are remarkable only as giving their names to the two countries in which they stand. It was August, and the peasants were busy in some places gathering the tobacco leaves. This harvest occupies more than a month; as they only pluck the leaves at intervals as they ripen, taking first those from below, and rising as the upper leaves expand and get ready. The first gathering had been finished some time, and its produce was hanging to dry in long festoons under the eaves of the cottages. I know no garlands whose effect, either on the moralist or painter, can be more pleasing than those of the green tobacco-leaf and the bright yellow maize as they cluster in fine contrast round the dark wooden cottage of a rich contented peasant. The best tobacco, however, is not grown here, but in the county of Heves, where its cultivation and preparation are well cared for, and a very superior article is produced. As an old smoker, I must declare that I know nothing equal to a pipe of good Hungarian tobacco, except, perhaps some of the best Turkish.*

* Csaplovics (Gemälde von Ungern) gives the following information on the tobacco of Hungary:—Two sorts are known in commerce: first, the dry yellow leaves for smoking. The best of this kind grows in the county of Heves, and is called the Debröe. Of this, about 15,000 cent. is produced yearly. Debreczin and the neighbouring counties afford from 50,000 to 80,000 cent.; and the county of Honth, from 8.000 to 12,000. Of the second class,—the brown leaves for snuff,—that produced in the counties of Szegedin and Csongrád, known in commerce as the Fünfkirchner, is the most esteemed, and may be reckoned at from 50,000 to 80,000 cent. Besides this, in other parts, from 12,000 to 16,000 cent. of the same kind is grown. A small quantity of fine tobacco, principally known and used in the country, is grown in several different districts to the amount of about 10,000 cent. In round numbers, the whole quantity of tobacco

We pulled up at a poor-looking little village, Terény; where our driver, however, assured us we should find a good inn, and an honest Magyar host. I had so often heard from Germans that there was not a tolerable inn in Hungary but what was kept by a German, and the Magyar was too lazy and careless for such work, and so often observed that my Hungarian friends seemed to doubt if the independent spirit of Magyarism suited the duties of the paid host, that curiosity aided the darkness of the night in determining me to try my fortune at the peasant's recommendation. Nor did he deceive us; the landlord himself was a stout bluff-looking fellow, as polite as a good will and honest purpose could make him; and his house was much cleaner than most of those we had been in. Our supper, too, was good and abundant, though a little rude in appearance. It is true, we heard the unhappy fowls killed to furnish it; but that could not be helped, as the hen-roost was close to our room, and the chickens had not the good manners to die quietly. I should not forget, that our bill next morning was a fair one: a compliment we could not always pay to more obsequious landlords. In justice to the Magyar, I must say he cheats less frequently than any of his neighbours. He is too proud to be dishonest,—except, indeed, in horse-dealing; and there, I believe, his reputation is little better than a Yorkshireman's.

Our horses arrived by good time in the morning, and we followed the small stream which, rising at Schemnitz, falls into the Ipóly, watering in its course a narrow and pretty valley, which occasionally opens into fine meadows, and then again closes on the road and rivulet. We amused ourselves by shoot-

grown may be estimated at 250,000 cent. of which 150,000 may be used in the Austrian manufactory, 40,000 reckoned for exportation, and 60,000 for home consumption. As Government allows no tobacco to be grown in any other part of the Austrian dominions except Hungary, and as all her subjects are smokers, she buys nearly at her own price in Hungary, and sells absolutely at her own price in Italy, Bohemia, &c. It is difficult to ascertain how great a revenue she obtains from this monopoly: the expense of collection, the roguery of her contractors, (said to exceed all belief,) and the contraband trade, must considerably diminish it: but, I believe, it does not average more than from 600,000*l.* to 800,000*l.*! The expense of collecting this paltry sum alone, is said to equal the expense of collecting all the customs revenue of Great Britain! Yet the smuggling carried on is now immense; and it is well known that little tobacco is smoked by the higher classes in Vienna but smuggled Hungarian. Hungarian tobacco has very lately been admitted into Austria, but only at an exorbitantly high duty.

ing at the turtle-doves and earless marmots, which occur frequently on the dry hill-sides. At Nemeti, the first stage, we heard with consternation that all the horses of the village were at work, two hours off, on Robot, and that we must wait till they were fetched back. What was to be done? There was no inn; and the village was but a miserable collection of Sclavack cottages, ill-built, ill-thatched, and ill-kept. In the centre of the village stood the wheelwright's shop; and that, too, bore little but signs of dilapidated wagons. H—— found amusement in sketching the misery, while I summoned up my most patient humour, and wrote my notes. The only variation to our occupation, during the four hours we remained at Nemeti, was when the soldiers, who were quartered on the peasants, came out and beat the call. We had often before seen at the cottage-doors a small board fixed between two poles, called a *Hack-bred*, to which a couple of small hammers were appended, but had never been able to make out its use. It now appeared that it was used to show that the soldiers were in their quarters; for at a certain hour every one was obliged to come out, and, by drumming on the board, testify to his presence.

Some time before we arrived at Schemnitz, the traces of mining were visible at every step; roads made of the broken slag, drunken miners, washing-sheds, smelting-houses, heaps of broken ore, and the heavy sound of the crushing-mills, all told us where we were. The town itself is entered by an old and strong gateway which conducts to a long, narrow, steep street, which was once evidently a mountain torrent, and is so hemmed in by the sloping hills that there is scarcely room for a single row of houses on either side. At the end of this street the mountains form a magnificent amphitheatre, the *proscenium* of which, to follow out the simile, is occupied by the churches and other large buildings; while the hill-sides are covered with the white cottages of the miners peeping out from amongst the green trees in which they are almost buried, giving to this part of the town the prettiest appearance possible. The whole of this mountain is traversed by veins of silver ore, and it has been so worked that one might walk to almost any part of it under ground. The pavement of the long street we had to traverse was so bad, and the ascent so steep, that we took pity alike on the poor horses and our own bones, and walked up it. I really do not know how to give any idea of its badness to an Englishman: to an Hungarian I should say that it was much worse than that of Presburg, which is

allowed to be the worst in the world. The reason they give for it here is, that in winter, which lasts seven months, the street is often one sheet of ice; and the holes and hillocks, which I complained of falling into and over, are then their only protection against a slide from the top of the town to the bottom every time they set foot out of doors. I pleaded for a Macadamized road; but they said it would not hold against the torrents of rain which flood the street in a few minutes several feet high, and which come down with such force as to carry men and every thing else before them. I suspect, however, there is another reason: the expense would fall on the town, and not on the peasants; and the honest burghers, like the nobles, have too great an affection for their own property to expend it on benefiting the public at large.

After engaging rooms in Schemnitz' best inn, the *Hohen Hause*, and changing our dusty vestments, we found we had still time for a walk before sunset; and, following the plan of an old officer, who always mounted a hill or a steeple to reconnoitre the ground before he took up his position and commenced action,—as he called hunting out and seeing sights,—we strolled up to the square watch-tower, from which we had a fine view of the town. After the dry brown plain of Pest, it was refreshing to see the cottages stuck on the mountain's side like swallows' nests, each in a pretty garden and half hidden amongst fruit-trees, with here and there a fantastic steeple, the ruins of a fine old castle—to be ransacked at our leisure—or the high roof of a modern smelting-house. Beyond the town a magnificent view opens over wild mountains and pretty valleys to an interminable extent; while, nearer, the Calvary hill rears its steeple crest and bids its devotees approach.

I know not whether the reader is aware what a Calvary hill is; but in every part of the Austrian dominions, as well as in Hungary, they are very common. A steep, but not high, hill is generally chosen, on which a chapel is built, or three crosses erected, bearing a representation of the crucifixion in a manner generally disgusting both to good taste and religion. The ascent is often formed by steps; and at certain distances are placed small chapels, each containing a picture or statue of one of Christ's sufferings. In Lent, the penitent sinner is commanded to pay his devotions here, and sometimes to ascend the hill on his bare knees! The one at Schemnitz has a handsome church, and, being in repute, is rich in offerings.

But I must not leave the old tower without mentioning the tradition which is connected with it, as it is characteristic enough of mining fortunes and miners' superstitions.

There lived in Schemnitz, many years ago, when the mines were so good and the miners so rich that all of them had silver nails in their boot-soles, a lucky fellow who had found out a way of getting rich faster even than his neighbours; so that they strongly suspected it was not all so honestly come by as it should, for in a very short time he became so rich that he could not count his own money. And this was the more readily believed, because his only son died suddenly, and soon after he himself dropped off, and then there was no one left to inherit all the money but his daughter Barbara. Now, during his life the old man had kept his daughter in a very quiet and modest manner; but no sooner was he gone than Miss Barbara determined to be a great lady and enjoy herself. She soon found a set of "loose lemans" who were glad to feed upon the rich miner's daughter; and a sad life they led of it. At last, some of these gentry went so far that they got into the judge's hands, and from his into the hangman's; and sure enough they were gibbeted on this very hill.

Now, although the ill-luck of her friends rather checked Barbara for a moment, she soon fell into the same evil courses again. It so happened, that from the windows of her house, where she and her companions were wont to feast and revel after their unholy fashion, the bodies of their former friends could be seen dangling to and fro on the leafless tree; and at times the rattling of chains was heard above their loud mirth, and gave rise to disagreeable pauses in their merriment. In vain did Barbara solicit the judges to remove the ghastly corpses; they had sent them there for her benefit, and there they must hang. At last, however, she promised to build a strong castle on the spot, and to leave it to the town after her death, if they would consent; and so the judges yielded, and the present tower was built.

But poor Barbara did not live long to enjoy her castle. Notwithstanding many warnings she still led a lewd life, and continued to make an open mockery of holy things. As she was entertaining a large part of her friends on the pleasant banks of the Gran on the very day the foundation-stone of the tower was laid, a letter came from a priest, one of her relations, warning her of her sins, and the certainty of poverty if she did not give over her riotous mode of living. "As sure as I shall never see

this ring more," said she, casting a valuable ring into the river, "so sure will my riches last as long as I want them." When the tower was finished, another great dinner was given; but in the midst of the feast Barbara turned pale with fear; for, on carving the fish set before her, she found on her plate the very ring she had thrown into the Gran.

From this time, nobody could tell how, but Barbara's money vanished as it were from her,—all her wealth seemed to be melting away in spite of her. Another misfortune, too, fell upon her; her favourite lap-dog—on which she had bestowed all that care and charity which she ought to have given to the poor—died; and a great trouble its death was to her, though every body else was glad enough that such an ill-tempered cur was gone. Nothing would content its mistress, however, but that it should be buried like a Christian; and a great to-do they made of it. The very next night a terrible storm arose, and a flame of fire came out of the dog's grave, and in the morning a bottomless pit was found where the grave had been! What with her poverty and her loss, and the bad things her former friends now began to say about her, Barbara fell sick too, and died, without so much as confessing her sins. Some charitable souls were still willing to bury her, and off they took her in secret to the churchyard; but a terrible hail-storm arose on the way, and the thunder rolled, and the lightning shot over them, so that they were forced to lay the body down and to seek for shelter. No sooner had they done so than a cry was heard in the air, and the hailstones seemed turned into dogs, which all fell on the carcass of poor Barbara, and carried it off to the bottomless pit, where they disappeared and were never seen more. "This," adds Mednyánsky, "happened in the year of our Lord 1570, and was written in the chronicle of Schemnitz; and, as proof thereof, the maiden's tower may still be seen."

On our return we fortunately met an old acquaintance, who introduced us to some of the students and professors of the school of mines, and made us at once free of Schemnitz. Some of the information we gathered from these sources, relative to the mines, I may as well now put together, and give the reader the benefit of it.

Schemnitz may be considered as the mining capital of Hungary. The mines are divided, from their position, into four districts, the Schemnitzer, Schmölnitzer, Nagy Bányaer, and Banater; of which the first is by far the most considerable. Each

district has its government, and its separate establishment of smelting-houses; but all send their produce to Kremnitz, in the Schemnitzer district, to have the gold and silver separated, and the crude metal coined.

A school of mining, in imitation of that of Freyberg, in Saxony, was founded at Schemnitz in 1760, and has attained considerable celebrity. It now contains about two hundred students, who receive their education free of cost, many of them being assisted with an annual donation of from twenty to thirty pounds for their support, and all being supplied with drawing-paper and pens, &c. at the expense of Government.

There are five professors, who deliver lectures on chemistry, *Hütte-kunsk* or metallurgy, mineralogy, mining, mathematics, surveying, and drawing. The course of study lasts three years, besides two years' practice in the mines; after which an examination must be passed in public before a certificate can be obtained.

The lectures are entirely in German, and indeed most of the students are German or Sclavackish. The professors give a very favourable account of the state of the school and the industry of its scholars. The students have access to a good library, where every new work of importance bearing on the subjects studied may be obtained, and where a considerable number of French and German periodicals are received.* The students give rather a different account. The younger students, they say—of course my informants were seniors—are generally better acquainted with the coffee and billiard rooms than with the halls of their professors; and the public examination is a farce, as it is well known that any one can purchase the *primam classem* (the highest certificate) by a bribe to the professors. How far these statements may be true, I know not; but I am inclined to believe that Schemnitz not only does not lead, but is far behind Freyberg, and indeed most other schools, in the adoption of modern scientific improvements. A strong proof of this is the very bad manner in which the Austrian mining establishments are said, by those who understand the subject, to be conducted in almost every part of the Emperor's dominions, and particularly in Hungary.

The students wear a neat uniform of dark green cloth turned

* To the disgrace of Schemnitz be it spoken, there is no good collection of minerals, either public or private; that of the college is below criticism. There is no dealer in minerals in the place.

up with red. The jacket has padded sleeves from the shoulder to the elbow, to protect the arms from the sides of the mines, with buttons bearing the crossed hammer and pick-axe. Behind is a large piece of leather, something like the tails of a coat, strapped round the waist, and forming in fact a posterior apron. In full dress they have gold epaulettes and a sabre.

Of course, one of our first objects was to see the far-famed silver mines. One of the *Practicants*, or more advanced students, accompanied us, to show and explain what was most interesting. To those totally unacquainted with mining operations, few things can be more uninteresting than to grope along wet narrow passages under ground, with a greasy candle stuck between the fingers; alternately breaking their heads against the top, or their shins against the bottom of the level. To me, however, it was interesting, from being able to compare these mines with those of England and some other countries. But the miner and geologist will be disappointed if they expect a scientific description of them; I neither possess nor pretend to the necessary knowledge; to know sufficient of a science to amuse oneself in its pursuit, and to be able to instruct others, are very different things.

With the usual mining salutation, "*Glück auf!*" we entered the *Spital-gang*, a fine nine-foot level, where we visited some of the new workings. Below this level a greater quantity of ore is obtained than from any of the other mines which properly belong to the town of Schemnitz. There is little difference between the manner of working here, and in England; and, though a miner might find the hammer heavier or longer in the handle—very important points—in one place than the other, they seemed to me to knock and blast the rocks just as we do. The ore contains gold, silver, and lead, and is often mixed with iron, copper, zinc, and arsenic, though the first three only in any considerable quantity. To raise the ore and clearings to this level, an ingenious water-wheel has been constructed,—I believe the first of its kind. It is furnished with a double set of buckets, one of which would turn it forwards, the other backwards; and the wooden canal, conveying the water, moves readily from one to the other, so that a constant motion is maintained. As soon, therefore, as the laden scuttles of one side arrive at the level and are emptied, the action of the wheel is reversed by the water being directed on the other buckets: the empty scuttles descend, and at the same time other full ones come up. An interesting point was remarked to us, where the green-stone is traversed by a gang

of shale, with slight traces of coal. From this point a fine railroad level runs to the daylight, as the miners call the opening; on which horses are employed, with trains of low carriages. The ore is broken to a certain size, by hand labour, before it goes to the crushing-mills; and is assorted by passing through a riddle, about the shape and size of the ordinary wooden bridges in England.

As we came out by the railway level, we found ourselves just without the gate at the bottom of the town. We then ascended the hill; and, about the middle of the town, entered the Theresia level, now little worked, and without much interest; this, however, as well as one higher up, is connected with the lower ones by shafts and workings.

The Rosalia is the highest and oldest of these mines, and is said to have been worked before the time of the Romans. Many of the ancient levels still exist in parts, and are easily known by being worked out with the chisel and hammer, instead of being blasted with gunpowder. The labour which this must have cost, is scarcely conceivable, as they are mostly ten feet high, made very wide at the bottom, and narrower towards the top. In many parts, both of Hungary and Transylvania, I have seen the same work, which, from its beauty and durability, cannot be mistaken, and it is always ascribed to the Romans; indeed, the Roman lamps, coins, instruments, and articles of dress, frequently found in such mines, place the matter beyond doubt. Further on, we came to an immense cavern, ascending to a great height beyond what the eye could follow, aided only by the feeble light of the miner's lamp. This is supposed also to have been the work of the Romans, but to have been effected by fire, as many rounded holes are observed, in which form the fire would have softened and broken up the rock. Going off from this cavern are many small passages, scarcely large enough for a man to creep into, which were probably formed in following offsets from the main vein. It is believed that nothing was taken away by the ancient miners but the pure silver, as the cavern is filled to a great height with the refuse of the workings, which is said to contain a large quantity of ore.

I must confess, I had for a long time considerable doubt as to the employment of fire in the mines. That the Romans did make use of fire in breaking up rocks, in other circumstances, the well-known passage of Livy ("*Ardentiaque saxa infuso aceto putrefaciunt,*") in the account of Hanibal's crossing the Alps, is suf-

ficient proof,—notwithstanding what ill-natured critics say of that historian's disposition for romance; but I had great doubts as to the possibility of its application to mining. The want of a draught of air, and the impossibility of making the huge fire Livy speaks of, and, more than all, the dreadful sufferings which the miners must necessarily have endured from the quantity of smoke and sulphurous vapours created, were such strong objections, that it required nothing less than the express words of Pliny to convince me; but they are too clear to be denied. "Hard rocks occur every where," he says; "these they split by means of fire and vinegar,* (*igni et aceto rumpunt;*) and, lest the smoke and vapour should be too great in the passages of the mine, the masses thus loosened are broken up with a hammer of one hundred and fifty pounds' weight; the ore is then carried out on men's shoulders day and night; they pass it in the dark from one to another; only the last sees the daylight." The miseries of the poor captives who were thus forced to labour, must have been frightful. Bishop Hene,† who has collected some interesting information on the government of the Roman mining establishments, and the then state of mining, quotes the following passage from Lucretius, (lib. vi.,) as confirmative of their miserable condition.

"Quidve male fit, ut exhalent aurata metalla?
Quas hominum reddunt facies, qualeisque colores?
Nonne vides, audisve perire in tempore parvo
Quam soleant; et quam vitæ copia desit,
Quos opere in tali cohibet vis magna?"

I need not tell the reader that here, as well as in England, the state of the miner in the present day is quite as good as that of the peasant or labourer. In Schemnitz, he does not work more than eight hours a day; his occupation is healthy, and he lives as well as he could by any other employment.

The management of all the mines in Hungary, which belong

* I am aware that these statements of the use of vinegar have been ridiculed; but, although unable to explain in what way it could have been applied, I do not think we have the right to deny two such positive assertions of its use. I have been told that fire is still used in the Hartz mountains. A great fire is made by the workmen on the Saturday evening, and allowed to continue till Monday, when the men return to their work. From the quantity of sulphur contained in these rocks, there is no difficulty in making them burn, though it is often very difficult to extinguish them when once ignited.

† Beyträge zur Dacischen Geschichte.—Hermannstadt, 1836; p. 97.

to Government, is under a chief, called the *Oberst Kammer-Graf*, assisted by a council composing the *Oberst-Kammergrafe-nampt*, which itself is subject to the *Hof-Kammer* in Vienna. Each district has besides this its own *Bergampt*, or council, composed of the chief mining officers of the district. The number of inferior officers is much greater than with us, and this is probably necessary on account of the voluminous written reports which they are obliged to draw up. This has the disadvantage, not only of adding much to the expense, but of lessening also the feeling of individual responsibility, and consequently, the stimulus to individual exertion. In general, the Oberst Kammer-graf, who is of high rank, understands nothing at all of the matters he directs; and, therefore, of course, trusts them to others; and it is allowed that they have been, and even still are, grossly mismanaged. Many of the officers themselves are best aware of, and most lament this state of things; but so many petty interests and ignorant prejudices impede improvement, and the Austrian Government itself has so unmeasured a dread of change, that the exertions of individuals avail but little. From the new Oberst Kammer-Graf, however, whose appointment was very recent, great hopes were entertained. I believe he is a man possessed of considerable scientific knowledge, united to a strong desire for improvement.

Austria has not yet learned that it is good economy to pay her servants well. The salaries of the mining officers, which even in Reformed England would run from 100*l*. to 1,000*l*. a year at least, do not average more than from 50*l*. to 100*l*.; and, though provisions are cheap in Hungary, yet the clothes which the station of these officers obliges them to wear, cost as much there as here. Where so much gold and silver slips through the fingers, it is not, therefore, wonderful that some has occasionally stuck to them. A few years since, a well-conceived, and long-undiscovered system of robbery was laid open, in which six of the Government officers of Schemnitz were concerned, and by which they had defrauded the state to a large amount.

The amalgamation process, which is universally acknowledged to be the best for separating the gold and silver from the baser metals, was obliged to be given up, because the officers could not resist the opportunity which it offered them, of defrauding their employers in the article of quicksilver. Let me state, however, that such of the officers as I had the pleasure of knowing, appeared to be men quite incapable of any such conduct, and they

lamented the badness of a system which threw so many temptations in the way of the needy.

The common miners, amounting in the Schemnitz district to twenty thousand, are exposed to the same temptation. They are not allowed to gain more than three florins per fortnight, or three shillings a week! As if it were to check any disposition to industry, it has been reckoned how much the miner can do comfortably in the fortnight, working eight or sometimes six hours a day. This quantum he is bound to perform, but he is allowed to perform no more; the Government finding him in oil, gunpowder, and instruments. This gives the miner many opportunities of peculation in these articles, which do not tend to improve his honesty, though rather a useful quality where gold and silver are in the case. The loss sustained in these articles alone, by the united rogueries of the labourer and his superiors, is said to be considerable. The method of paying the miner is not less defective: he is sometimes paid according to the amount of the material brought out without regard to quality, in which case he defrauds his employers by working where it is most easy to himself; sometimes, according to the quantity of metal produced, when he is apt to work the mine unfairly, taking only the richest parts, and leaving much good material behind. In either case a premium is offered for roguery.*

I have often heard it stated that Government gains so little by these mines, that it does not allow more work to be done than is just sufficient to maintain the miners; how far this may be true it is difficult to say, for they are not too anxious at Vienna that Hungary should know precisely the state of her revenues; but after what I have stated, it would not be astonishing if such were the case. The private enterprises, however, maintain themselves, in spite of the ten per cent. they pay the king, and the losses in smelting, &c.—a pretty good proof where the fault lies if those of his majesty do not succeed better.

One of the Government officers, after a tour of inspection

* I am sorry that I cannot contrast with this, the system adopted by John Taylor, Esq., in the mines under his management in England, but it would lead me too far away from my present subject. It must suffice to say, that he has made the master's and workman's profit coincide; and while he enables industry and talent to gain its due reward, he so excites the attention and enterprise of all engaged, that every head is working for the discovery of new sources of profit and means of economy. To those who are interested in this subject I may refer to a lecture of Mr. Taylor's in the Mining Journal, No. X. and to Mr. Babbage's little work on Manufactures.

through the principal mines of England, in which he had been at first much astonished to find such comparatively great improvements, and such certain profit, from such very inferior means, solved the problem thus before he left our shores:—"The reason of your advance and gain, and of our delay and loss, is simply this: when it is necessary to do any thing, you do it at once, while we are obliged to send long written reports to the Bergampt, to wait till those who know little of the immediate circumstances deliberate about them, and if consent is at last obtained, it is frequently so late, that the advantages to be derived from it are lost." Without confidence in subordinate agents it is impossible to act with effect. One would have fancied Austria had proved in her wars the truth of this proposition too bitterly ever to have forgotten it.

About one half of the Schemnitz district is in the hands of private individuals or companies, who are said generally to lack capital and spirit. The laws of Hungary, respecting mining, are exceedingly liberal. Any one, on applying to the Kammer, (as the exchequer is called,) may receive permission to work any mine which does not interfere with other workings, no matter on whose estate it may be, paying only a moderate sum to the proprietor for the land used for buildings or necessary works. Likewise, any mine already worked, if left unworked during fourteen days, may be taken up by any one else. One-tenth of the clear produce is payable to the Crown, and, generally speaking, though I think not necessarily, the ore is smelted in the Government smelting-houses, for which a deduction is also made. The metal must all be coined in the country. I remember an old gentleman, who was telling me some of these facts, was very bitter against the English for not having sent some of their superfluous cash to Hungary instead of South America, whence there would have been some better chance of a return. I do not know that the Austrians would look on an English company with jealousy, and, if not, I think their chance of success would be very great.

I had an opportunity, thanks to the politeness of the chief of the surveying department, of seeing the plans of the mines, which, however, would be unintelligible from description. The most interesting plan was that of Joseph the Second's adit, a magnificent work. It is twelve mining feet high, by ten broad, and extends from Schemnitz to the valley of the Gran, a distance of nearly ten English miles. This adit will carry off the water

from mines now quite unworkable, and will lay open great riches to the miner. It is so constructed, also, as to be used either as a canal or railroad, by which the ore may be carried to a point better adapted for smelting than Schemnitz. It has already been forty years in hand, and is estimated to cost 400,000*l*. before it is finished. The most difficult part, under the hill of Schemnitz and the Erzberg, has yet to be encountered.

The next day we dedicated to visiting some of the more distant works, and one or two interesting geological points in the immediate neighbourhood of Schemnitz. We followed the road to St. Antal, by the Francis shaft, and went from thence to the smelting-house, where there is a curious steam-engine, with a moveable cylinder, apparently a whim of the engineer's. There is but little smelting carried on at Schemnitz, for want of wood, most of the ore being sent to Neusohl, where fuel is in great plenty. Not far from the smelting-house, they have discovered a vein of coal, of which they have obtained some, but in very small quantities, and of an inferior quality. Another great desideratum at Schemnitz is water, to supply which immense reservoirs have been constructed in the hills; but, after a dry season, they are quite inadequate to supply all the crushing-mills and washing-machines. Nothing can be more rude than the washing process as carried on in Schemnitz; it is a disgrace to a school of mining, especially when it is managed so much better in the duchy of Salzburg, and even in other parts of Hungary itself.

We passed a quarry of fine greenstone porphyry, and further on, in the trachyte, examined a vein of opal. I should have said that the Erzberg (mountain of ore,) containing the principal mines, is of greenstone, which generally, in Hungary, bears the richest ores, and below it lies the trachyte. The trachyte covers a great extent of country, and we observed it several times in the course of our walk; in one place, near Kolpack, it occurs of a fine red colour. About mid-day we stopped at St. Antal, a village of Prince Coburg's; and, wandering through the gardens of the castle, found a green spot too tempting for rest and lunch to be passed at such an hour. As we crossed the court I observed a curious-looking bench, the use of which did not immediately occur to me; but, on inquiring of a gardener, his answer "the flogging-board," and his look of surprise at my ignorance, reminded me that at Arva I had seen something very similar. We called to a man who was at work in the gardens to bring us

a pitcher of water, and were not a little struck to find he was a prisoner, wearing heavy irons. I have often seen in German and Italian towns, the disgusting spectacle of a string of chained prisoners, employed in sweeping the streets or in other public works, but this was the first time I had seen them in the employ of private persons. Every Hungarian noble had formerly the right to have his prison, and to confine his own peasants, both before and after condemnation: how far he may have the power of appropriating their labour during this period I know not; but it would seem to be a power liable to great abuse, and it is one therefore of which the greater number have been wisely deprived. In some few families the right still exists. But we will leave the subject of prison discipline, or rather want of discipline, for another time, and return to Schemnitz, which we reached after a long walk, late in the evening, quite ready for our suppers and pipes.

I must not forget to state, however, as I have mentioned this subject, that an exhibition of public flogging takes place every Sunday morning at Schemnitz, and it rarely happens that some women are not among the sufferers. As far as I know, such barbarity as the public flogging of women is confined to Schemnitz, and the plea urged there for its necessity is, the protection of the young students' morals. Skeptics may doubt whether the exhibition of brutality by those who from their position ought to be respected and imitated, would tend materially to moralize the youth they govern, unless indeed the worthy magistrates of Schemnitz choose to take upon themselves the part imposed by the Spartans on their slaves,—but then those skeptics doubt every thing.

Another circumstance, which occurred the day before we quitted this "City of the seven hills," as some father-land-loving writer calls it, gave us no great idea of the wisdom of its municipal officers. As H—— was quietly sketching the ruins of the old castle, a bustling little body who called himself "*Ober-Notair* of the royal burg of Schemnitz," came up to him and demanded with great impertinence, by whose authority or permission he had ventured to draw there. Swelling with all the pomp of offended dignity, and growing more loudly indignant as he felt the quiet contempt with which H—— treated his remonstrances, he threatened the utmost vengeance of the law against one who had taken such a liberty with so important a place; and, hastening off to the inn, denounced us as a party of spies, who he declared

should not leave the town till he had examined their passports, and discovered their villanous intentions. To be taken for a spy by the peasants in Hungary would be to run a fair risk of ill-treatment, if not of death, and, therefore, the moment I returned, I hastened to the *Stadt-Hauptman* (the captain or mayor of the town,) and, mustering up all my very wickedest words in German, placed so forcibly before his worship the enormity of the Notair's crime, that he put himself into a dignified rage at the unlucky wight, and promised us most summary satisfaction,—nay, if we would wait till the next day, the pleasure of witnessing it. Our revengeful feelings, however, were not strong enough to detain us, but we left him with the persuasion that the next traveller in search of the picturesque would meet with a more civil reception.

Of course we could not leave Schemnitz without visiting the castle; and, accordingly, the custode, who was wondrous proud of the dignity of his office, attended with his huge keys, and led us to its ruined gateway. The castle itself is a square building of no great size, enclosed by a high wall with four bastions, besides the new tower which the town has erected for a watchman, whose shrill whistle gives evidence four times within the hour, of his noisy vigilance. The centre building was formerly a church, and traces of its original destination are still visible. In the part formerly used as the chancel, is the date 1491; while, in another, evidently later, and added for the accommodation of soldiers, is 1559. Sufficient still remains to show that the church was built in a good and somewhat rich style of pointed Gothic, which in England would be considered to belong to the fourteenth century: one of the spiral staircases has much beauty. The governor, for I believe the honest man considered himself rather as such than as simple custode, told us bloody tales of Turks and Templars,—how the Christians fought, and the heathens fled; and, when he showed us in one of the under rooms a mill, he assured us the knights had ground the corn there during the siege with their own hands; and a seven barrelled field-piece, a quantity of hand-grenades, small arrows for the steel-bow, spears, swords, and a heap of old weapons, which are still preserved here, were all he said to "discomfit the heathen, and drive the wicked ones from the wallls." I cannot vouch for the authenticity of this account, as I was too lazy to make application to examine some half-burned archives which still exist in

the public library, nor, indeed, am I quite certain it would have been worth while—is not the romance of history its better part?

In one of the bastions some prisoners were confined, among whom was one shocking villain, then in chains, for a most extraordinary and horrible crime,—no less than that of hammering some score large nails into the sitting part of an old woman!

One of the oddest of the wonders of Schemnitz is a large-headed, broad-mouthed, bow-legged, deaf and dumb dwarf,—just one of those caricatures of humanity which so often fill up a foreground of Paul Veronese, and set off so well the elegance of the figures which surround it,—a merry creature, with a strong predilection for spirits and tobacco. In early childhood he was stolen from Schemnitz, and travelled over great part of Europe as a show. Restored by I know not what accident to his native land, he vegetates to cherish an enormous pair of steel spurs, which, by day, he attaches to his legs by a strange complication of straps, and at night lays under his pillow lest some one should rob him of his treasure. I could not help thinking, that, if some Hungarian friends of mine had seen the little dwarf in his spurs, they would scarcely have maintained their own so pertinaciously, especially as they were no cavaliers, and made as little use of them as he did.

We had spent nearly a week at Schemnitz, and it was time for old Stephan to repack, and for us to recommence our wanderings; but I must tell one tale more against the Schemnitz police before I quit them. The Haiduk, or town-servant, who had been sent to order horses for us, and to whom, as is frequently the case, the vorspann money was paid in advance, had pocketed an extra sum allowed on this station, on account of the distance the peasants had to come, and only given them the ordinary sum, of which they justly complained. I left a note for our friend, the City Captain, with a recommendation not to forget the Haiduk, when he called the Notair to account; the which, some of his fellows assured me, would procure him his five and twenty blows. I had no mercy for one who robbed the peasants, and I should not have been sorry to have extended the punishment to some others of their oppressors.

CHAPTER XIII.

SCHEMNITZ AND THE MINES OF HUNGARY.

Departure from Schemnitz.—Sunday Dress of the Miners and their Wives.—Neusohl.—The Landlord's Room.—The Market.—The Sclavack Belt.—Dyetva Peasants.—Visit to a Country Gentleman.—Kind Reception.—Smelting-house.—Collection of Minerals.—Beet-root Sugar.—Manufactures in Hungary.—Castle of Lipcse.—Field Nursing.—Mysteries of the Castle.—Sliács.—Bathing in Company.—Altsohl.—Mathias Corvinus.—Prisons and Prisoners.—Flogging.—Werböczy.—Burnt Village.—The Veil.—Kremnitz.—Mines.—Mountain Fall.—Mint.—The Silberblick.

It was about seven in the morning as we left Schemnitz; and, though in the middle of August, bitterly cold. The traveller in Hungary should never be without his fur cloak, summer or winter, for, during the hottest days, the mornings and evenings are often very severe. It was Sunday, and the people, mostly Germans, were already flocking to the churches. The women wore their *Peltzröckel*, or short sheep-skin coat, fastened in front with a silver chain and clasp, and ornamented with large silver filigree buttons, while the Hessian boots with high heels, like those on the shoes of our great-grandmothers, peeped from under their dark petticoats. In every part of Hungary, the woman in her holiday dress has a pair of high boots reaching to the knees,—red, yellow, or black, as the taste may be; and to those who have seen the state of the village road and streets in winter, when the mud is knee-deep, the utility and decency of these boots will be evident. The men wore the Hungarian dress, which, indeed, the German settlers have every where adopted, richly braided, and ornamented with the same profusion of silver buttons and chains. The miners complain that the good old days are gone for ever, when the workmen had so much silver that the heels of their boots were shod with it; but, if not quite so plentiful as formerly, it is evident, from the luxury and comfort of their dress, that the sober and industrious can still accumulate a sufficiency of it.

The first village we passed, as we pursued our way to Neusohl, was Bela Bánya, a part of the township of Schemnitz, and possessing mines and crushing-mills. The valley soon becomes exceedingly pretty: the mountains are small, and the vales narrow; but the former are well diversified with rocks and woods, and the latter variegated with a bright meadow or a narrow strip of yellow corn. Smiling valleys, however, do not always make happy people; and the two half-starved hags, the only inhabitants we could descry among the miserable huts which constitute the village of Kozelnic, proclaimed any thing but prosperity here. We passed, later in the day, several wagons full of peasants, apparently returning from some distant church: in one, an elderly peasant was reading prayers, while the others were listening respectfully, uncovered, though it was dreadfully cold, the thermometer being at 50° of Fahrenheit. Further on, we crossed the Gran by one of those long wooden bridges so common here, and followed the river to Bucsa, at which place we got fresh horses. Two hours more brought us to Neusohl, where the *Krebse* furnished us one poor room, and that indeed the landlord's, every other being filled with travellers. Never, reader, in the course of your travels, where the German language is spoken, or the German stove used, accept the landlord's room; rather sleep in your carriage; for, by so doing, you decline an obligation at which they grumble, and for which they make you pay,—and you escape feeding the host's host of hungry vermin. These rooms, from their dirt, heat, and constant occupation, are perfect nests for all sorts of venomous insects; as we proved by a wretched sleepless night of feverish agony at Neusohl.

Neusohl is a wide-streeted, tolerably well-built country town; rather imposing in its appearance, because all the houses appear to be in the Italian style, with flat roofs, though I believe it is only a high parapet carried up to hide the roof. In this parapet false windows are generally painted; and, in one case, an artist, whose adherence to the truth of nature was admirable, had painted the Venitian shutters as in a very broken and dilapidated condition; no doubt, thinking it most natural they should be so. The use of Venitian shutters is common in every part of Hungary; more so, perhaps, than in any country I know. All houses, above the cottage of the peasant, and sometimes even these, are furnished with this luxury.

Our first morning at Neusohl was fully occupied in observing the peasants at market. The night before, we had noticed some

hundreds of the small light wagons of the country, each with four horses, filling the large market-place; their owners making their beds, in, under, and around their wagons. Though only the ordinary weekly market, the concourse of people seemed to us very great; but in the neighbourhood of the mining towns more money is in circulation than elsewhere, and the markets are consequently better attended.

The different trades had each its separate quarter. Just under our windows were the sellers of broad-brimmed hats; and Bicknell and Moore never had Bond-street loungers more difficult to please than the cunning Neusohler found his Sclavack customers. This crown was too flat; that brim was too narrow —not being more than eighteen inches wide! "Who would buy so ugly a hat as this?" said one, as he stuck it jauntily on one side over his greasy locks; or "Who, so thin a felt as that?" said another, as he gave it a thump that would have tried the strength of Mambrino's helmet itself. And then the cheapenings the poor merchants had to undergo; though the price of a good hat, large enough to form two or three of any other country, was only half-a-crown! The cobblers exhibited a goodly array of boots and shoes, almost as much peaked at the toe as a Turkish slipper; and, when yellow, bearing a very close resemblance to it. The best Hessian boots cost about seven shillings. Among the principal traders were the dealers in articles of red leather. Their ware was chiefly composed of the great belts worn by the peasants; nearly a foot wide, and so thick and hard that I think they would turn a pistol ball. The Sclavack does not feel comfortable without this huge incumbrance buckled round his waist; he thinks its support strengthens him: he uses it for a pocket; he conceals his knife and fork in it; he hangs his flint and steel to it; his tobacco-bag is generally stuffed into some corner of it; and, if he does not find his short wooden pipe stuck into his boot, or between the back of his neck and shirt, he even searches for that too in his belt. As the Sclavacks have adopted the Hungarian fashion of short shirts, the belt serves to fill up the interval between the shirt and the trowsers, which, however, it effects but imperfectly. Large leathern wallets formed another important commodity; these the peasant uses to carry his bread and bacon in whenever he goes to any distance from home. These, and many other articles with which their booths were filled, were, as far as the leather was concerned, exceedingly well made; but the buckles, though showy, were rudely fashioned, and broke almost immediately.

Some pretty sheep-skin jackets with the wool inside, highly ornamented with flowers sewed in coloured leather, of which I asked the price, were ten shillings each.

There were several different kinds of wheat and barley; as well as, oats, rye, buck-wheat, white beans, peas, dried prunes, poppy seeds (used in making puddings,) and a small round farinaceous seed called *prein* or *gelbe kàsa*. The fruit-market was poor; some unripe ill-looking water melons declared the mountain air agreed but sadly with them.

The dress of the peasants was excellent: the morning was cold, and many of them had their peltz röckels slung over their shoulders after a very Spanish and most picturesque fashion. It is here a short cloak with sleeves, generally of a dark colour, lined with fur and braided. As it hangs over the left shoulder, leaving the right arm free, often fastened in front with a silver band, and descending about half-way down the thigh, it gives considerable grace to the figure. The leg is encased in thick white pantaloons, finished by a rude sandal strapped round the ankle; while the whole man reposes under the shadow of his hat, which is literally wider than any part of his body.

The women are generally worse clothed than the men; often with bare feet, and a very scanty portion of petticoat. The more wealthy, however, have knee-boots, and sheepskin jackets. Among the Sclavacks the women are hardly treated; I have frequently observed them carrying heavy burdens while the men were quietly smoking beside them. The general covering for the head is a handkerchief, which reaches behind down to the waist, and in front ties under the chin. The unmarried girls wear their hair in a long plait hanging down the back; the married have it tied up, and wear a band across the forehead.

Old Stephan, after a good deal of difficulty, persuaded two very fine fellows to come into H——'s room that he might sketch them. They were from Dyetva, a district in the neighbourhood of Neusohl, celebrated for the beauty of its men and the ugliness of its women; the honesty of the parties being in the inverse ratio of their comeliness. Although Sclavacks, they had remarkably black hair, oval faces, and arched noses. Some of our friends, on seeing the sketch, protested against a pair of boots worn by one of them; declaring that no Dyetva man had ever come fairly by such articles. They were fine fellows, however; and seemed to like the joke of being drawn, although they objected to standing still so long; and declined taking any thing for the trouble we

had given them till Stephan suggested that a few glasses of Sli-wowitz might not be amiss on so cold a morning.

We had sent early in the day a letter of introduction to the family of Mr. R——, who resided near Neusohl, with our cards and a request to know when we should find them at home; for luckily we were aware that in Hungary, as I believe generally on the continent, etiquette requires that the stranger should make the first visit,—a knowledge, the want of which has sometimes excluded our countrymen from society. The answer was, that they dined at one, and a carriage would be sent for us a little before that time.

Accordingly, at the hour fixed, a smart hussar came up to announce the carriage; and in about half an hour we found ourselves entering the gateway of an old castle—one of those four-cornered buildings enclosing a large court, and bearing a square tower at each angle, so common in Hungary and Transylvania. Part of it had been somewhat modernized: but on one side was still the open staircase and corridor, communicating with a whole suit of rooms; and on the other an old black tower, preserved quite in its ancient state, in honour of Francis Rákótzi II., who is said to have held a Diet within its walls of the Protestant chiefs who had taken up arms in his cause.

We found a party of eight or ten persons already assembled, —most of them, like ourselves, chance visiters; a circumstance which makes little matter where housekeeping is conducted on so plentiful a scale as in Hungary. Nothing could exceed the kindness of our reception; and it was not long before our host, having first got out of us the plan of our journey, and the possible length of our stay here, observed, "Well, I am sorry it is not longer; but I can manage to show you something of the neighbourhood, even in the time you mention: for the rest, rooms are ready for you here. By-the-by, why did you not come here yesterday? you would have found it more comfortable than the inn. There are horses to take you about, and my son will be happy to show you what is at too great a distance for me; and, when you must leave us, I hope you will allow me to give you some hints for your route, and letters of introduction to render it more easy." Now, who in the world could feel himself a stranger when so addressed by one of the most good-natured old gentlemen in the world, who did not make any one of these offers with the least thought of trouble on his part, or refusal on ours?

We were now in the house of one of the higher class of Hun-

garian country gentlemen; like their prototypes in England in many respects, the best specimens of their countrymen. But it should be remembered that we were also in the house of a highly educated and very well-informed man, and it is of such only I speak. Proud of their country, they are not blind to its wants; ready at any moment to draw their sabres in defence of their constitution, they are by no means ignorant of its defects; and it is they who boldly stand forward in the support of liberal opinions in the lower chamber. Mixing more with the peasants than the absentee magnates, they know what are their real wants, and they would fain remedy them. Retaining a strong love for their own language, they do not neglect the cultivation of others, especially the German and French; but they are not the apes of every folly of foreign growth, and they think it no disgrace to eat, drink, speak, or dress as their fathers did before them. I am not one of those who would maintain national prejudice, for it is national ignorance; nor who would oppose the introduction of any foreign improvement, for that were to oppose the progress of civilization; but I despise the man who can see nothing good at home, and I hate him who is ashamed of a country which his own neglect tends every day to injure.

During our sojourn with our hospitable friend, we had an opportunity of seeing most of the wonders of Neusohl and its neighbourhood.* The smelting-house, in which six or seven huge furnaces are constantly at work, is the largest in Hungary. From the facility with which wood is obtained, most of the ore from Schemnitz is brought here to be smelted, as well as a considerable quantity of copper ore obtained in the immediate vicinity. The ore is for the most part very imperfectly separated from the matrix, as indeed might be anticipated from the bad state of the crushing and washing mills we have before alluded to. On its arrival here it first undergoes a process of roasting in the open air, by laying alternate layers of ore and charcoal one above the other, and so exposing it to a slow combustion, by which the sulphur and arsenic are sublimed and driven off. The slag which is supposed still to contain any quantity of metal undergoes the same process, and is again smelted. A large quantity of

* The mines of Herrengrund we did not see, partly for want of time, and partly from not knowing all the interest they possess. The produce is 1,500 cwts. of copper, with a small quantity of silver; but the *cementwasser*, and the formation of ice-beds, are the objects which I most regret not having examined at Herrengrund.

pure lead is used at Neusohl as a flux; a great part of which is lost,—it is said, to the amount of twenty pounds for every mark of silver,* which, as the lead is from Styria, and costs nearly twenty shillings the cent. is very considerable. They have now constructed chambers through which the smoke passes, and deposits a small portion of the lead; but the loss is still much greater than it ought to be.

The magazine of wood is such as might be expected where so many fires must be fed. The trees are floated down from the mountains during the floods singly as they are felled; and are here, by a particular arrangement of canals, flood-gates, &c., brought to any point desired, collected and arranged, previously to being reduced to charcoal. I believe the charcoal is made here, as elsewhere, by piling immense heaps of wood in a circular form, leaving only a very small opening for air, and covering the whole with fine dust to prevent a too rapid combustion. The principal part of the wood so employed is fir and beech.

I must not forget to mention Professor Zipser's collection of minerals; its own intrinsic value, as well as the politeness with which its learned owner shows it to strangers, are both deserving of notice.†

Within this last year or two, a company has been formed at Neusohl for manufacturing sugar from beet-root. The sugar they produce is white and fine, but it is said to be inferior in flavour to that of the cane. The process of manufacture is simple: the beet is torn into very small portions which form a pulp; this is reduced to a syrup by evaporation in a double cylinder, and the vegetable particles and colouring matter are removed by repeated refinings with milk or blood.

Tempted by the high duties imposed on our sugars by Austria, and encouraged by the success of the beet cultivators in France, they have commenced a system which, if followed by others, would be most injurious to Hungary. Our host was one of the shareholders; rather, as he said, to avoid the imputation of slackness when others thought the country might be benefited, than

* The mark of silver is worth 24 florins, or 2*l.* 8*s.* according to the report of the miners: authors state it at 25 florins, or 2*l.* 10*s.* The mark of gold is 366 florins, or 36*l.* 12*s.*

† It may be useful to English collectors to know that the mineralogists of Hungary are much in want of collections of English fossils, for which they would gladly exchange their rich minerals.

from a persuasion of the utility of the undertaking. "I should not regret," he observed, "losing the little I have ventured to-morrow to have commerce placed on a more natural footing. Would to God I might see the day when we should receive the sugars of England, and she take our wine and corn in return; how quickly would improvement march, how happy might Hungary still be!" Such are the opinions of an enlightened man: the generality of Hungarians, however, are full of the idea that nothing but manufactures can ever make them rich; they do not see why they should not prosper there as well as elsewhere; but, unfortunately, those who have tried have found out the fact to their cost; but then they have a most happy way of shutting their eyes to facts, and declaring that the Austrian Government will not let them prosper! Poor Government! though far from being your admirer, I must confess much more is laid on your shoulders than you ought to bear. Mischievous you very often are, but I believe more frequently from stupidity than intention. Want of population, want of manufacturing habits, want of education, of mechanists, of capital, of industry, and the existence of a much more agreeable, easy, and comfortable way of employing both time and capital,—that is, in production,—are quite sufficient causes, without accusing the Austrians of the failure.

Nor is success to be desired, unless indeed it is desired to buy dear and bad what might be bought elsewhere cheap and good; and to remain isolated in barbarism, rather than mingle in intercourse with civilization. In a Diet which took place as far back as 1405, in a preamble probably to some foolish restrictive act, it is declared, "Quum quodammodo pars sit magna dementiæ, id quod de suo quisque habere potest ab aliis mutuare;"* and such is unfortunately the state of political economy at the present day in the heads of the greater part of Hungarian country gentlemen.

About ten miles above Neusohl, along the pleasant banks of the Gran, stands the village of Lipcse, and, on a rock above it, the old castle of the same name. Four large long-tailed horses of our host's own breeding, put to a light britschka which a pair of ponies would have sufficed for, soon brought us to the foot of the hill. In our drive up the valley we observed a new style of nursing, which necessity—ever fruitful mother—had taught the Sclavack women to have recourse to when engaged

* Engel. Geschichte von Ungarn. Part ii. p. 245.

in the business of the harvest. Three strong poles are planted into the ground, and made to meet at the top; and from these is slung a kind of hammock, in which the child lies; while a blanket is thrown over the whole to protect the little nestling from the sun. The castle of Lipcse is still in good preservation, and is used as a dwelling by the Government steward, who has the care of the forests in this neighbourhood, as well as a prison for offenders. Its exterior is difficult to describe; its high walls, small windows, and peaked roof distinguish it from any thing we have in England; while its little corner towers, with sugar-loaf top and unturreted battlements, remind one of those small castles so common in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh.

As we were still admiring the dark arches of the old gateway tower, two young ladies, sisters of the Burg Herr, came down to welcome our companion as an old acquaintance, and to invite us into the castle. As in many other strong places, the entrance door to the castle itself is midway up the wall, to be reached only by a temporary staircase of wood, which in the present case conducted us to the part inhabited by the family, where we found all the comforts of a modern house enclosed within walls of six feet thick. It formed so beautiful a picture, that ancient chamber with its richly groined ceiling, as the light of the setting sun fell through the arched window on the figures of its fair habitants, that H—— sighed as he thought how little time he could stay, and how fine a study it would make. A door in this room communicates with a secret staircase which has an opening in the outer wall of the castle; and by this means it is said that Szécsi Maria carried on a secret intercourse with her lover Wesselényi, then a young knight in her father's service. I am rather inclined to doubt this legend; though it appears that the Palatine did at one time reside here, for on the stairs is a huge similitude of a bull's head carved in wood, to commemorate a feat of Wesselényi's, who is said to have killed a tremendous wild bull in the neighbouring forests with his own hand.*

Our pretty hostesses kindly volunteered to act as our guides to the mysteries of the castle. In one part was a chamber constructed below the floor of another room, and only to be entered by a secret trap-door, where three unfortunate knights were once

* The Aurochs, (Bos Urus,) formerly a habitant of the great forests of Germany and Hungary, and of which this was undoubtedly a specimen, is now extinct in those countries, though still found in one forest of Poland.

held prisoners, and who, on the castle being suddenly stormed and taken, were forgotten in the haste of flight, and unknowingly starved to death by the conquerors. Here was the little Gothic chapel preserved unhurt by the lapse of years, or by the rude hand of man. There was the well cut in the solid rock, and I know not how many fathoms deep. They have a good plan of showing such things here, by throwing down a lighted bundle of straw, which the draught made by its passage causes to blaze up and illuminate the dark secrets of dungeon, mine, or well.

In an upper room we found one of the prisoners who had been engaged in the Schemnitz mining robbery: he was a locksmith, and was allowed the use of his tools, with which he was working very comfortably for his own profit. As his conduct had been irreproachable while here, he was allowed every liberty he could desire.

Near the top of the castle were some originally very handsome apartments; one room, with its large bow-window projecting from the corner of the castle, and looking on both sides far and wide over the beautiful valley of the Gran, stretched out as upon a map below, must have formed a delightful saloon. This was evidently the favourite bower of "some faire ladye" of former days; for a small open hearth and chimney—rare luxuries in those days—were constructed in the bow itself. How easily can fancy recall the scenes of by-gone times in such a spot! Youth and beauty occupied in working the arms of some favoured knight on the silken scarf; and, ever and anon, as the sun cast his last rays over the valley, watching the windings of the road with hopes of his long-delayed return, or, at least, that some wayworn pilgrim would demand her hospitality, and wile away the weary hour with tales of war and love from foreign parts. It requires little imagination to draw such a picture in Hungary: travelling is difficult and communication tardy; in the country, where books are scarce, and society distant, ladies fill up their time with embroidery, and a stranger who can talk to them of distant lands is not unfrequently looked upon as a God-send in such remote places.

It would have been a disgrace to have left this neighbourhood without having visited Sliács, a favourite bathing-place only a few miles from Neusohl, had not indeed an invitation to a large dinner given by some of the bathers to the rest of the company induced us to go. Sliács is not too well provided with the means of lodging those who seek its healing waters; but our friends had

kindly bespoken rooms for us, and we found ourselves at once comfortable. Not that our apartments were magnificent; from some Englishmen the cold whitewashed walls, bare floors, odd chair or two, rough table, and plain box bedstead filled with clean straw, might scarcely extract that meaning adjective: but we were old travellers, and had fared worse; besides, the rooms, such as they were, had just served during a much longer residence one of the most young and beautiful brides of Hungary. It is wonderful how contentedly an Hungarian lady quits the luxury of her own home, and submits to sleeping in her open carriage, or suffers all the inconveniences of such wretched accommodations as those of Sliács, without a murmur.

Every body comes to a bath with a full determination to enjoy himself, and to-day was especially one of festivity. The dinner, long and ponderous, with speeches and toasts in abundance, occupied from one till nearly four. Toasts are not given as with us, after dinner; but between the courses, and always in the presence of the ladies; the speeches are the same complimentary convivial affairs that after-dinner speeches are with us. Some mountebanks and riders, attended by the ever-ready band of gipsy musicians, filled up the time till sunset, when the ball was to begin. Here, again, we were fortunate enough to receive an invitation, and enjoyed till midnight as much heat and dust as a summer ball could possibly produce in any other part of dancing Europe.

In the course of the day we visited the different springs; some cold, and others tepid. They contain an oxide of iron with carbonic acid, besides salts of lime, magnesia, and soda. The cold springs are considered highly tonic, and are recommended for nervous complaints. The warm are alterative and tonic. They have deposited here, and in the neighbourhood, a large quantity of magnesian limestone: indeed, the upper layer of the strata, on which the bathing-place stands, has been formed by its own waters. The principal bath is about fifteen feet long by nine wide, under cover of a large wooden building, affording room for promenading and music. I was astonished to hear that it was the fashion to bathe here in public: but, conceive my horror, precise reader, when some very pretty ladies quietly informed me that they took their second bath in the evening, and hoped I would join them! Supposing that I had misunderstood the matter, I could only bow, and look as an ingenuous youth should look on such an occasion; and it was not till some of my male

friends assured me of the fact, and offered to supply me with a bathing-dress, that I might make my appearance in the received costume, that I fully comprehended the invitation. Accordingly, about six in the evening, my nether man encased in a wide pair of linen trowsers, and the upper in an equally wide linen shirt fastened close at the neck, and covered up in a cloak, I marched down to the bath. On each side are separate tiring rooms for ladies and gentlemen, where the cloaks and slippers are removed, and the bather then descends the stairs, and enters the water before he is admitted into the bathing-room, so that the figure is entirely concealed, and nothing but a new head is seen to enter. We were a pleasant party of about fourteen up to our necks in hot water; and we amused ourselves for an hour—the prescribed time—in moving about and talking, just as in a drawing-room. I do assure the delicate reader, that, as far as I could see, nothing occurred that could shock any one:—a "*soyez sage!*" or two, sotto voce, or an occasional contact which produced a kind of electric thrill through one's frame, might perchance occur; but, as for the latter, it was only from want of habituation to it that such an effect was produced; for a thin old gentleman of sixty, who had used these baths for many years, assured me such accidents did not thrill him at all! Let me say, however, that many ladies object to this admixture; and it is so much unknown in some parts of Hungary, that they doubted me when I mentioned having seen it. One poor girl, though strongly recommended by her physicians to bathe here, had never been able to persuade herself to enter, and told me she wept with shame the first time she saw it. Such baths are common in Austria, and, I believe, in some other parts of the Continent.

The quantity of gas emitted from the water is so great, that a woman is constantly employed in waving a flag over the heads of the bathers to produce a current of air, and so remove it. The gas was still strong enough to give me a headach in a few minutes, and the current of air starved our heads and shoulders to perfection. Some drink the waters, as well as use them in bathing; and it is considered best to do both together. For this purpose a stream is constantly running from a pipe above the bath, round which the drinkers flock to fill their glasses. A trick very neatly played on an unfortunate Austrian Countess, whose pride and ill-temper had rendered her the enemy of the whole bath, deterred me from venturing. A mischievous wight, who offered to fill her glass for her, by a cunning sleight of hand exchanged the

clear water of the spring for the dirty contents of the bath; and, if the homœopathic doctrine be true,—*similia similibus curantur*,—gave her an opportunity of getting rid of some dozen horrible diseases at a single draught. The effects of the Sliács baths are said to be almost miraculous; but I cannot vouch for half the wonderful things I have heard of their efficacy.

The next morning we paid our visits and made our adieus to our friends in the bath, after which four miserable peasants' horses dragged us slowly back to R——. We felt exceedingly sorry when the time arrived that we must quit our friends at R——. By our host and all his family we had been received and treated in a manner which, as passing strangers, we could scarcely understand; had we been acquaintances of years' standing, they could not have taken more interest in us, or behaved to us with more genuine kindness.

Our way now lay towards Kremnitz; but we determined to deviate a little from the road to visit Altsohl, formerly a place of considerable importance, and still interesting from its castle, once the favourite hunting-seat of Mathias Corvinus. I had too great a respect for the memory of the "Good King Mathias," as the Hungarian peasant still calls him, to pass the spot where, laying aside for a while the severe rigour of his reforming spirit, and allowing to his nobles some repose after the strict discipline in which he held them, Mathias bent all his energy and determination—great minds are always energetic, however trifling the object of their pursuit—against the unhappy bears and wolves of the forests of Altsohl.

Corvinus, placed on the throne by a succession of fortunate incidents, rather than by right or merit,—for the power usurped by his father, John Hunyad, as governor of Hungary, during the minority of the weak Ladislaus, could scarcely entitle him to the former, while his extreme youth at the time of his election precluded the possibility of his having, then, proved the latter,—still knew so well how to maintain and adorn his exalted position, that he would seem one of those rare instances in the history of the world, where fortune has awarded a crown to one whom nature has formed to wear it. In vain Austria and Bohemia pressed him on the west; in vain would Poland, on the north, drive him from his throne; in vain did the warlike Mahomet, with his infidel hordes, ravage the southern provinces of his kingdom; as vain were domestic conspiracies and civil wars as foreign plots and hostile invasions: Mathias, feared by his nobles and loved

by his peasants, overcame by arms or diplomacy all his enemies, and extended his conquests till Vienna itself was subjected to his rule.

There are few instances in which great men have directly aided the progress of constitutional liberty—when, though governing others, they have known how to govern themselves; and Mathias had this failing of great minds—he would fain have been despotic. The checks which a constitutional form of government often imposed on the execution of his plans, or the stern voice of reproof in which a representative assembly sometimes dared to address even this dreaded monarch, suited but ill with his determined disposition. Fortunately, however, Mathias was as politic as proud; and, when pressed for men or money,—the budget has ever been the best bulwark of liberty,—no one knew better how to obtain them by timely concessions than the wise King of Hungary.

His encouragement of learning and the arts was equal even to that of the Medici; he employed the best artists from Italy; he founded a university at Presburg; he established the first printing-press at Buda; and the library of MSS., containing fifty thousand volumes, which he collected at an enormous expense, was a monument of his liberality of which few princes can boast an equal. These MSS., the greater part transcribed in the most beautiful manner by the copyists he maintained at Florence and in other parts of Europe, were richly gilt, and uniformly bound, and may still be considered as gems of biblical taste. During the period the Turks occupied Buda, the barbarians used this library to light the stoves of their baths; and in 1666, when Lambecius obtained permission to search there, he found only three or four hundred dusty volumes hidden in a dirty cellar: the bibliomane secured three of them: and a few years afterwards, when the Turks finally evacuated the place, some more were recovered, most of which have been presented to the public libraries or foreign courts. Bitterly was the death of Corvinus lamented by the Hungarian peasantry; and the "*Meg holt Máttyás, el múlt az igazság*,"—Mathias is dead, and justice gone—is still a common proverb in their mouths when oppression escapes unpunished.

It is probable that the castle of Altsohl was built by John Hunyad in 1457, when, after the defeat of Giskra and his Bohemians, he burnt the old castle, of which some few remains are still visible. It has been long neglected, and the necessary re-

pairs it has undergone have not been such as to improve its appearance. It is melancholy to see how little either the Government or people seem interested in preserving these monuments of past times, so important to history and art. Altsohl is royal property, and is used for the residence of some Government officers as well as for a prison. The old gateway is degraded to the purposes of smoking bacon: in winter a large fire is made; the double gates are shut; and the bacon, hanging from the top, becomes well cured by a repetition of this process every night for some months. There are some Gothic arches of rich and elegant workmanship, as well as several old doors, which have escaped the hand of barbarian improvers, and still proclaim the former magnificence of the building. I like the open balcony which runs round the interior court of this and almost all the old castles in Hungary; it gives a life and lightness to the large court-yard, which almost reconciles one to its manifest inconveniences.

We were shown some villanously whitewashed rooms; in one of which the ceiling is considered embellished by a series of terrible-looking figures, called Roman Emperors and Kings of Hungary. Our guide assured us the great Diet—meaning the celebrated assembly of Polish nobles under Louis I. to establish the order of succession in the two countries, in 1382,—was held in this room; though, if I am not very wrong in my notion of the age of the castle, it was not then in existence. Below the floor, in another room, is a small secret chamber, where Bethlen Gábor is said to have concealed the sacred crown of St. Stephen. It is singular that, although twice chosen king, and in actual possession of the crown, this champion of Protestantism never placed it on his head, though it is highly probable that it might have secured him the throne.

The castle is now used only as a prison, and steward's house; and its solid gateway is, as usual, hung with handcuffs, leg-irons, whips, and other notable instruments of torture,—one of which was new to us, and excited our curiosity. It was a flat board, of the shape of, and, from the resemblance called also, the Violin, with a hole in the centre, and two smaller ones at the end; the former, as we afterwards learned, for the head, and the latter for the hands of unfortunate transgressors of the law. The violin is used only for women; and they are generally made to promenade the town, bearing this clumsy substitute for a collar round the neck, amidst the laughter and abuse of the whole place.

While on this subject, I may as well say something of the prisons of Hungary, and the treatment of prisoners.

• Many of the buildings used for prisons are old castles now no longer inhabited; or, in other cases, the lower part of county-houses, where the magistrates meet for the transaction of business. Several prisoners usually occupy one room, which generally does not appear deficient in size or light, though always unclean, and commonly ill-ventilated. There may be some still worse places than these—travellers often talk of horrid dungeons; but I never happened to see such, and cannot therefore speak of them. Any very dangerous ruffian, whose escape is much feared, is put in irons and secured in some strong place whence escape is impossible. In ordinary cases nothing would be easier than to get out of an Hungarian prison, though I believe it is rarely attempted.

The common prisoners in the towns are made to do the work of scavengers, and are also employed in other ways, such as drawing water, carrying mortar and stones for public buildings, and in performing any other labour to which the county officers choose to set them. In some places they are the only labourers to be observed, and the clanking of their chains follows you at every step: sometimes they may be seen threshing corn, at others driving cattle, and in one case I remember to have been ferried across a river by a prisoner in chains. They are allowed, frequently, even in small towns, and always in the country, to go about without any guard; the only restraint being the iron ring round the ankle, united by a chain to another ring round the waist. According to the character or crime of the prisoner, his chain is light or heavy. Where the prisoner is an artisan, he is generally allowed his tools, and carries on his labour for his own profit.

It must be remarked that I do not speak of the Austrian political prisons; one of which, Munkács, is situated in Hungary: of them I know nothing from personal observation, nor is it probable I should have been allowed to visit them, had I applied.

The charge of intentional cruelty cannot be supported against the prison discipline of Hungary, but it is sadly wanting in efficiency. The most galling restriction of the prison ought to consist in the deprivation of liberty, and in the observance of strict order and sobriety; which are not only severe punishments to the disorderly, and much dreaded by them, but have likewise a beneficial effect on the future character of the culprits: here, on the contrary, the prisoners have a great deal of personal li-

berty, and feel the restraint of confinement almost as little as when free.

The morality of a prison is about the same in one country as another, but the pernicious effects of bad example are greater here than with us, because the moral ignorance of the peasantry is deeper, and their habits have much more of that wandering and adventurous character which lends such a charm to the robber's life, and they are, therefore, more easily led into adopting it. It is rarely a shepherd gets into prison that he does not learn some new and improved plan of stealing his neighbours' sheep before he comes out, and it is commonly in the same school that a swineherd acquires those winning ways that makes another's pigs follow him as docilely as did the beasts of former days the pipe of Orpheus. A simple fellow, who had been sent with a large herd of swine into some woods in Transylvania to winter them on acorns, laughed when some of his fellow-herdsmen complained that their flocks grew smaller and smaller in spite of their care. "Why don't you put on bells," said he, "as I do; you would then always hear the ringing of them if any one came among your pigs?" A few nights after, the poor fellow found all his own pigs gone, and the bells left behind them. Sorrowing, he returned to his master's house, and received his flogging without a murmur; but, when it was over, he exclaimed, "If I could but see the man who stole my pigs, I would treat him to a bottle of wine if it took the last kreutzer I had." On his master's inquiring what he meant, he answered, "He must be a clever fellow; he must know some great secrets, and who knows but he might teach them to me? He not only drove my pigs away, but he went among them during the night—and they so savage that I dared not have done it myself,—took off their bells, and coaxed them away without a squeak or a grunt from any of them. Oh, he must be a great man!" A few months of prison education would hardly have been lost on so willing a scholar.

Although I have several times seen the flogging-block, and although every one assures me that it is very frequently and very publicly used, it so happened that, during the whole time I was in Hungary, I never saw a peasant flogged; but I once accidentally saw a soldier under punishment, which I may describe, as the operation is performed in precisely the same manner.

When the prisoner is laid down and secured, the Haiduk stands over him with a long hazel stick, about the thickness of a finger, with which he gives the blow with his full force, waiting a mi-

nute between each stroke. Considerable talent is required to flog well, the object being to inflict the smartest pain with the least bodily injury; and, therefore, no one is allowed to perform who has not perfected himself in the art by practising on a stuffed sack. All this is very disgusting and very savage, brutalizing to the lord even more than the peasant; for the reader will scarcely believe that some of these hardy fellows laugh at such a punishment, and it is a point of honour among them to bear it without flinching. Nothing renders the young peasant so irresistible to his mistress as his heroic support of the five-and-twenty. I believe the greater part of the Hungarian landowners are sincerely glad that this barbarous privilege no longer belongs to them; but with their bailiffs the case is different. They think all order, all law is at an end, declare they can no longer manage the rebellious peasantry, and lament, as the fall of Hungary, the end of their petty tyranny. I could have often laughed, had not the laugh been soured by scorn, at the doleful complaints of these men, so often the oppressors of the peasant, and robbers of their masters' property.

But, if the noble can no longer indulge his spleen in the sufferings of his inferiors, the officer enjoys that right in its fullest extent: if a buckle is rusty, a horse ill cleaned, the soldier a few minutes late on parade, or any other slight infraction of duty committed, the military officer can order him to be laid down, stripped, and flogged before the other men. The occasion on which I witnessed it was as I was travelling, early in the morning, over a plain where a regiment of dragoons had been exercising: the greater part were wheeling off, but one troop I observed remained on the ground. As we drew nearer I could distinguish the officer in front of his corps, and before him a man in uniform stretched on the sand; and I could hear the whistling of the hazel stick through the air, and the dead sound of it falling on living flesh. It was a sickening scene, and I was heartily glad when we had passed out of sight and hearing of it.

The youngest subaltern may at any time, and for very trivial faults, flog the men under his command. A young lieutenant of hussars told me himself, that, having once been reprimanded by a superior officer for the bad condition of a detachment under his care, he told him that, if he did not object to his flogging a little more freely than common, he would have them in order in two months' time. Consent was readily given, and he kept his word; but during that time he had not a moment's rest, nor had

a day passed without several punishments, for, as he said, he had flogged them up to the highest pitch of discipline,—and he was praised!

As a town, Altsohl's best days are gone. A single, over-wide, unpaved street, with some broken walls and towers, are all that remain of its former importance. Its inhabitants were busied in spreading to dry the first drawing of the hemp, which is cultivated to a considerable extent in this neighbourhood; and there was not a stagnant pool near, but was filled with women up to their waists in its black waters.

While we stayed to devour something, which our appetites induced us to suppose a dinner, we again met our mountebanks from Sliács, who gave H—— a proof of their sleight of hand by conjuring away his camp-stool. These people are always either Bohemians or gipsies; the Hungarians having a profound contempt for such occupations, to which scarcely any necessity can drive them. In Hungary, as well, I think, as in Germany, these gentry are called English riders; and the common people so firmly believe them English, that the servant of one of our friends inquired whether we did not all ride upon our heads in England.

I was sorry to leave this neighbourhood without seeing Dobronyiva, where there are said to be the ruins of an old castle, the gift of King Ludwig to Werböczy; but I was told they were so inconsiderable as to be without interest,—an account I have since had reason to doubt. Stephan Werböczy was entrusted by the Diet, in 1507, to draw up a digest of the acts of the Diets and of the customs of the country, that the laws might be known and understood by all. In 1514, he presented his *Tripartitum* to the Diet, and from that time to the present it has formed the chief part of the *Corpus juris* of the Hungarian lawyers. The weak character of the king, and the position of Werböczy as a follower of Zápolya, who courted the favour of the lesser nobles, contributed to render this work extremely favourable to the interests of this class, as well as to restrict the power of the Crown and magnates; but the time of its publication, just after the servile insurrection under Dosa, stamped it with a character of cruelty and injustice towards the peasantry, of which they have felt the ill effects through many generations. It is, however, undoubtedly a work of the greatest national interest, and may almost be considered the foundation of written law in Hungary.

One of the first objects which arrested our notice between

Altsohl and Kremnitz was one of those melancholy pictures of desolation, only too common here, a burnt village. It was almost six months since this village had been burnt to the ground, and as yet not a house was rebuilt. Where the unfortunate inhabitants were lodged in the interval, Heaven only knows. We saw a few women and children about the place with no covering save a short chemise, and just in the state one might suppose them to have escaped from their beds on the first alarm of fire. In many cases of this kind subscriptions are made to aid the sufferers in rebuilding their houses; in others, the landlord befriends his peasants; or in some, as here, they are left alone in their misery. Wooden cottages with thatched roofs, surrounded with corn-stacks and stables, offer such tempting food to the devouring element, that a fire once lit can rarely be put out till it has consumed the whole village.

Instead of pursuing the most direct road to Kremnitz, we made a considerable *détour* for the sake of seeing the opening of the great Schemnitz adit into the valley of the Gran. We found the opening a little beyond Zsarnovia, in a country abundantly supplied both with wood and water; but the working had ceased at this end, though it was still progressing at the other. In this valley of the Gran, which is in some parts so beautiful that I am inclined to compare it with that of the Waag, we more than once observed a curious custom, which, but that the Turks never advanced into this part of Hungary, I should have attributed to their influence,—viz.: that of the women veiling the lower part of their faces. The girls conceal only the chin, but the married women the mouth also. This covering, like the veil of the East, is formed of a long piece of white linen cloth, passed round the head so as to bind it tightly, and then turned round the neck, crossing the face and hanging down over the bosom. It is worthy of remark, that, by the same persons who would consider it immodest to go with the whole face uncovered, the petticoats are worn so short that they do not reach to the top of the boots, and in consequence the brown knees filling up the interval, are exposed without a suspicion of impropriety.

We entered the smoky suburbs of Kremnitz over a pavement almost as bad as that of Schemnitz; one might really believe from the state of the streets, that the inhabitants of these mining towns had their thoughts and interests so deeply buried in the bosom of the earth, as to have quite forgotten to make any arrangements for those who are doomed to wander upon its sur-

face. A fine pair of blue eyes—I always loved blue eyes shaded by black hair—invited us to take up our quarters at the Krone. The best room was occupied; but then the aforesaid blue eyes made such a pretty apology, and offered us so kindly the use of the room they themselves illuminated, that it was impossible not to find any accommodation good. Our letters of introduction at once laid open to us all that was most worth seeing in Kremnitz. The old Hungarian proverb, that "Kremnitz hath walls of gold, Schemnitz of silver, and Neusohl of copper," had prepared us for greater riches than the mines can now boast of. Though still worked for gold and silver, the richest veins are in a great degree exhausted; and of the former workings a considerable part now lies below the water, the pumping machine being no longer used. To clear them would not appear a work of any great difficulty; but how far it would pay is another question; for here, as in Schemnitz, the highest veins have ever been the richest. The matrix, or *gangs-masse*, is entirely quartz, the rock generally greenstone. These mines now produce about 15,000 marks of silver, and 250 marks of gold annually. The washing-floors* we visited belonged to private companies, who hold the richest and best mines here, and are certainly very superior to those of the Government at Schemnitz. They have not as yet any movement in the upper floors; but they are aware of the advantage it gives, and are about to introduce it. Kremnitz enjoys a great advantage in a very plentiful supply of water, for which she has to thank an Archbishop of Gran. In former times the primate of Hungary enjoyed the titles of master and assayer of the royal mint, and was therefore in some degree connected with the mines. The patriotic churchman at his own expense carried a water-course from the county of Thorotz to Kremnitz,

* The process used for separating gold and silver from the matrix in which they are held, is similar to that used for lead or copper. The metal is for the most part mixed up with the stony mass in such very small particles that it can only be separated perfectly by smelting: but, to prepare it for this, it is first of all broken by the hammer to about the size of the pieces Macadam recommended for roads. It is then exposed to the stamping-mill, where it passes under huge blocks which fall alternately and reduce it to the consistence of mud; it is next made to pass with water over slanting frames, where the heavy metal-bearing particles rest, while the lighter run off. The smelting removes the remaining stony matter, and separates the gold or silver from the baser metals; for it is comparatively rare that any metal occurs pure. In addition to this, it is sometimes roasted or exposed to combustion in the open air, to drive off the volatile metals—sulphur and arsenic.

nearly fifty English miles, by which to the present day an abundant supply is obtained from the other side of the Kremnitz mountains.

At a short distance beyond Kremnitz we were shown a curious phenomenon, a slide or falling in of a mountain. The crown of the mountain, about six hundred yards long and two hundred wide, had fallen in so as to occasion a valley of considerable depth. We could gain no information as to the date of this occurrence, but to a certain extent it tells its own tale; for the perpendicular face of the rock is covered with the open mouths of old mining shafts and levels to which no passage now conducts, and which therefore, must have existed before the catastrophe took place. It has been conjectured that the interior of the mountain had been so much hollowed out by the process of burning the rocks, as noticed at Schemnitz, that, the natural support being removed, some slight earthquake had shaken down the overhanging crust. But I think it more probable that it has been effected by an earthquake of considerable force, which must have first thrown up the rocks, and then received them into the chasm it had formed; for on the slope of the hill, down nearly to the town, are scattered some hundred enormous blocks of white quartz—the whole surface of rock exposed by the fall is of the same quartz,—looking more like the ruins of some Sicilian temple than the ordinary position of masses of rock, and for the appearance of which in such a situation no other solution can be given. On this slope are traces of former buildings, the date of which must certainly have been antecedent to the present position of the masses of stone I have mentioned; and it is highly probable that they were mining buildings, and that they were destroyed simultaneously with the mines. Independently of the consideration that the exposed surface bears no marks of any large cavity, the Romans were too skilful miners to have exposed themselves to such an accident. This opinion is further confirmed by the statement of our guide that on the other side of the mountain he believed a similar falling-in to have occurred where no mines ever existed, the space formed by which now serves as a natural reservoir for water.*

In Kremnitz all the gold and silver produced in Hungary is

* I find from a note in Engel (Geschichte von Ungarn, pt. iii. p. 61,) that, in 1443, a great earthquake occurred in Hungary, Poland, and Bohemia, and that the mines in Hungary were much injured by it; so that it is pro[redacted]this may fix the date of the fall at Kremnitz.

or ought to be coined, whether gained by private individuals or by the Government. The Hungarians always had, and have even to the present day, the greatest horror of their gold and silver leaving the country, and they firmly believe that they should all grow rich if they could but keep it at home; so that many laws have been made at different times with this object in view, and among others one which renders the coining at Kremnitz imperative on the Government. The amount annually coined at Kremnitz is about 250,000*l.* sterling (2,500,000 florins *c. m.;*) but it is probable this is much less than the amount produced, for it is known that a large quantity finds its way to Vienna in bars,—besides the acknowledged 267 marks of gold and 17,812 of silver—of which no account is rendered to the nation. The gold and silver, when brought to Kremnitz, are mixed together in molten masses in different proportions, according to the district whence they come:* here they are separated by boiling in sulphuric acid, by which means sulphate of silver is formed while the gold remains pure, and the acid is again separated from the silver by lime. The process of coining, allowing for the difference of machinery, is pretty much the same I believe every where. The metal is rolled into thin plates, the round pieces punched out, reduced to weight by delicate filing, cleaned in spirits of wine, and then stamped. The stamping-machines now used are new ones made in Vienna from a Prussian model; but they do not work well, the stamp not falling flat on the coin. This might be remedied by a very simple change in the machinery; but they say they have no mechanist here capable of doing it, and consequently they will continue to wear out their stamps unnecessarily for some time to come. The silver is mostly coined into pieces of twenty kreutzers (zwanzigers,) and the gold into ducats and half ducats.

On the morning we were about to leave Kremnitz, the gentleman to whose kindness I had been already indebted for much attention sent down to tell me I might see a *Silber-blick;* which, as it occurs but once a week, and rarely at a convenient time for travellers, was an opportunity not to be missed. I was just in time. Contained in a gigantic caldron was a molten mass of

* It is not improbable (as suggested by Hene) that the noble metals, united in this way in different proportions, was called by the Greeks ΗΛΕΚΤΡΟΝ; for, as far as we know, they were not acquainted with the method of separating them, and therefore could have used pure only what was found in a pure state.

liquid metals,—gold, silver, lead, and copper,—over the surface of which a huge pair of bellows continually drove streams of flame.

The object of this process, which lasts four-and-twenty hours, is to separate the noble from the ignoble metals, which is effected by the oxidation of the latter. At the moment the oxidation is complete, a bright bluish-white metallic lustre spreads itself over the whole surface of the liquid metal, which is hailed with no slight joy by the workmen, as it proclaims that their long and painful task is finished.

The impure metals are then allowed to run off, a stream of warm water is passed over the gold and silver to cool them, the solid mass is taken out, cut up into bars, weighed and sent off to the mint, where the gold and silver are separated, as already described, and coined. The smelting-houses of Kremnitz are the best in Hungary: instead of the common bellows, they have the double-cylinder bellows worked by water, which maintains a constant blast; and the loss of lead, instead of being twenty pounds to the mark, is reduced to twelve.

And here we shall rest for a little space from our travels, and dedicate a short chapter to an important part of the laws and institutions of Hungary, which, although frequently alluded to, has not yet been fully brought before the reader's notice.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE HUNGARIAN NOBLES.

Nobility in Hungary a Privilege, not a Rank.—Bulla Aurea, similar to our Magna Charta.—Privileges of Nobles.—Tenure of Property not Feudal.—The Insurrection.—Non-payment of Taxes.—Classes of Nobility.—The Magnates.—Count Crachat.—The Gentry.—The "One-house" Nobles—their Hospitality.—The Constituency of Hungary compared to that of other constitutional Nations.—The Costume of the Nobles.

"*Nemes ember vagyak!*" (I am a nobleman!) proudly answers the mustachioed Magyar when any question of freedom of speech or action is raised; and, as he does so, he twirls the cherished ornament of his upper lip, strikes together his long spurs, and seems to increase in stature on the announcement of his dignity. Whence flows this pride of rank? Not from the social position conferred by it, for I have seen a noble wear the livery of servitude; not from wealth, for many of them are as poor as the peasantry; not from high name or historical recollections, for the reputation of the greater number never extended beyond their native villages, and the ignorance of these at least is so great as to preclude the indulgence of such associations. No! from none of these—the ordinary attendants upon rank, and for which it is commonly respected,—does the pride of the Magyar arise; but from the solid advantages of civil and political privileges, which, if less poetical, are much more substantial considerations. In fact, the word "noble" has a meaning altogether different from its signification with us. It answers more to our "freeman," and expresses a right to certain political and civil privileges not enjoyed by the rest of the population.

From the æra of the conquest of the country the Hungarian nobles claim to date the origin of their rights and privileges; but the legal act by which they were secured, and by the terms of which the present monarch at his coronation swore to maintain them, was executed in 1222.

This act, "Sacratissimi Regis Andreæ Secundi Decretum," is

commonly called the Magna Charta of Hungary, or *Bulla Aurea*, and was obtained from the weakness of Andreas and his Barons by the great body of the inferior nobles in arms, under his son Bela.

So important a document may claim some notice even from the passing traveller. Its principal enactments are the following:—

1. Personal freedom was secured to every noble, by rendering it illegal to imprison him till cited and convicted before the ordinary tribunals.

2. In civil rights, the lesser nobles obtained freedom from taxation; from the necessity of foreign service, except at the king's expense; defence against oppression on the part of governors of counties; the descent of property without hinderance to the sons; and, on the failure of male heirs, the appropriation of a quarter to the daughters; absolute immunity for the widow, even in case of condemnation, and confiscation of the property of the husband; and some minor enactments, apparently directed against the oppression of the great nobles.

3. In ecclesiastical matters, the priesthood were confirmed in the same liberties and immunities as the nobles, and their right to tithes of corn and wine in kind established for ever.

4. Politically, the condition of the lesser nobles was bettered, by being placed more nearly on an equality with the higher nobles; by the subjection of all to the court of the Palatine, except in cases of life and death, or confiscation, when the King alone could condemn; by the reservation to themselves of the right of admitting foreigners to place and power; but, most of all, by the thirty-first and last article,* by which the right of resistance is fully acknowledged in case the king, or any of his successors, should not observe the terms of this charter.

From that day to this, the Kings of Hungary have sworn, at their coronation, to observe the conditions of the Bulla Aurea; and it is on this foundation that the chief rights of the Hungarians repose.

Since the year 1687, the last article respecting the right of

* The Magna Charta has nearly the same provision. "And the said twenty-five Barons (appointed to watch over the observance of the charter,) together with the commonalty of the whole land, may distrain and distress us all the ways possible, namely, by seizing our castles, lands, possessions, and in any other way they can, till the grievance is redressed according to their judgment; saving harmless our own person, and the person of our queen and children: and, when it is redressed, they shall obey us as before."

resistance has been omitted in the coronation oath; not, as the royal decree says, "from any objection to its true sense, but lest evil-disposed persons by a false interpretation should make a wrong use of it."

The English reader can scarcely fail to be struck by the singular coincidence of two countries, so far apart as England and Hungary, having obtained, within seven years of each other,—the English in 1215, the Hungarians in 1222,—through the weakness of their monarchs, the great charters of their liberties. Nor, if he looks a little further, will he be less surprised to find that at that time the Hungarians were equal, if not before us, in enlightened notions of personal freedom, of civil right, and of political privilege. It would be out of our province to investigate the causes which have produced the different results which we observe at the present moment; but I suspect a fair estimate of them would give us little cause for the indulgence of national vanity.. The accident of geographical position has often worked mighty results in our favour and against the Hungarians.

The prerogatives of the Hungarian nobles, as they exist at the present day, are commonly divided into two classes, the Cardinal and the non-Cardinal. The Cardinal prerogatives are three, and are all derived from the provisions of the Bulla Aurea.

1. The person of the noble is inviolable until tried and condemned, except in cases of high treason, or when taken in the fact. Of course, imprisonment for debt is unheard of. The court of the noble—that is, his house and a certain extent of land about it,—is a sort of sanctuary into which no legal officer can enter without permission. Such privileges, however unnecessary where the *Habeas Corpus*, the trial by jury, the right of bail, and the freedom of the press,—so many complicated barriers raised by human wit to protect the liberty of the subject against the undue exercise of power,—exist, are nevertheless of infinite value where such is not the case; and they, in fact, answer nearly the same purpose in a much simpler manner. Our only objection to them is, that they are confined to the few. They may sometimes let the guilty escape; but that is so trifling a fault, compared with the oppression of the innocent, that it is scarcely worth mentioning.

2. The noble is subject to none but his legally crowned king.

3. A noble alone is capable of holding landed property; for which he is liable neither to tax, tithe, nor toll. The legal tradition of tenure, if I may so call it, supposes the Hungarian noble

a descendant of those who first conquered the country, and among whom it was afterwards divided by the king; and from thence is deduced his right to hold it, without any other condition than the duty of appearing in arms under the banner of his sovereign, to defend the country from foreign invasion. We must diverge for a few moments to consider more minutely this Hungarian tenure, and to compare it with the feudal tenure once common in other parts of Europe. The Hungarian noble holds his lands as a gift from the sovereign; and, on the failure of heirs male,* it recurs to the donor, to be re-bestowed on some deserving person. This property cannot be legally sold,† and its disposal is strictly cared for. The sons, on coming of age (twenty-four years,) may demand a certain portion as alimony; and, at the death of the father, the estate must be equally divided amongst them all; a slight advantage only being accorded to one, and that the youngest,—the right of keeping for himself his father's house.‡

It has been a matter of dispute whether this is a feudal holding, or whether, in fact, the feudal system ever prevailed in Hungary. The question depends entirely on the meaning attached to the term: if by feudal be meant merely the holding of land under the obligation of military service, it certainly did exist; but I fancy this would be an incorrect interpretation, for, in every age and

* Female fiefs, or fiefs common,—for, under these, both sons and daughters inherit in equal shares,—do exist: but they are few in number, and generally small in extent. A striking exception to the latter restriction, however, occurs in the county of Arva, almost the whole of which is a female fief.

† Notwithstanding this, estates are sold every day; for a man can mortgage for perpetuity. Although the intention of the law is thus defeated, the title to the property is still insecure; for any member of the family obliged to sell, can at any time redeem the estate by paying the original purchase money, and the sums laid out in improvements. If, for instance, A. B. sold an estate for a thousand pounds to C. D. in the year 1800, any member of A. B.'s family, his nephew's or cousin's descendants, in 1900, may pay the 1000*l.* together with the "ameliorations," and receive back the estate. In order to provide against this contingency, the sum is commonly entered in the title deeds as the double of that really given, and the purchaser runs up such a bill for improvements, and the law is so dilatory, that it is often ruinous to take an estate back again. Still thousands of these law-suits are commenced every year, to the benefit of the lawyers, if of nobody else.

‡ The reason assigned for this provision is, that the younger son may be induced to remain in the father's house, a comfort to his aged parents, after all the rest have left to seek their fortunes in the world, and still have a shelter for his head when they die. He cannot, however, claim it till the death of both parents, the widow having a prior right.

country, the holder of landed property has been liable to be called on to defend, either in person or by deputy, both his property and the country of which it forms a part: but if by feudal be understood that system by which the possessor of every estate was obliged to submit himself to some superior, to do homage to him on taking possession of his lands, and make himself liable to a variety of obligations, in return for which he could demand protection and support, it is in total contradiction to the whole spirit of Hungarian law. Several Kings of Hungary, attracted by the power the feudal system conferred on the monarch in other countries, and either themselves foreigners, or influenced by foreign counsellors, did attempt to introduce it, but always met with the most decided opposition. The very prerogative, "An Hungarian noble is subject only to his legally crowned king," seems expressly intended to prevent the possibility of vassalage, or the dependence of one noble upon another. The feudal system, too, contained gradations of rank innumerable, essentially opposed to the principle that all the nobles have the same rights. The tenure of property then in Hungary is not feudal: and although many of the semi-barbarous institutions of the middle ages, which in vulgar parlance we call "feudal," were common to Hungary with the rest of Europe; and although perhaps these same nobles, whilst they rejected the yoke themselves, may have imposed some of its burdens on their peasants; yet may we safely affirm that as a system feudality never prevailed in Hungary.

The most important among the non-Cardinal prerogatives of the noble are, his exemption from having soldiers quartered upon him, and his exclusive right to sell certain articles within the boundaries of his own estates. We shall now consider how far some of these institutions are adapted to the spirit and wants of the present age.

Every Hungarian noble is born a soldier,—such is the theory of the constitution; and, in former times, when directed against the undisciplined hordes of the Moslem, or engaged with similar forces in the border warfare of Poland and Bohemia, well did they maintain the theory. Since that time, however, a great change has taken place; and the events of the last war showed how ill the institutions of former days were fitted for the present time. When the troops of Napoleon advanced on Vienna, the Emperor quitted his capital, sought refuge in Hungary, and called on his faithful Hungarians to place themselves in the breach

between him and his victorious enemy. All griefs were instantly forgotten; in vain Napoleon tempted them by promises of a constitution, of freedom, of nationality; they remained true to their king, and flocked in thousands to his standard. A strange picture they are said to have presented. Here a rusty sabre, there a broken musket; this man seeking arms, that asking for ammunition; horses and men, alike untrained to service, forming a mass of confusion and disorder which carried the elements of defeat within itself. The first shock was sufficient to scatter to the winds the hereditary defences of the nation. Far be it from us to reproach them for it; they had nothing but a good-will to help them; and one rather wonders at the wild enthusiastic loyalty which brought them to the field, than accuses them of want of courage when obliged to quit it.

The insufficiency of the *Insurrection*, as it is called, however, in its present form, was proved beyond a question; and the next consideration was, how it could be remedied. It was evident to all that either the nobles must be trained and taught the use of arms, be formed into a National Guard, or consent to pay taxes. They have constantly and earnestly demanded the first of these expedients, but the Government as constantly insinuates the necessity of the second. In the mean time Hungary is without defence: for the Government is so jealous of any accession to popular power, and so conscious of the dissatisfaction of the Hungarians with its proceedings, that it will not allow any thing like a national arming to take place; while the Hungarians stoutly maintain their right of defending themselves, and refuse to compound for their personal services by a tax for the support of mercenaries. And a wise, a noble resolution we hold it to be; for what they want in an army is a defence for Hungary, and not an instrument for the subjection of others, which might in its turn be employed against themselves.

Another privilege of the Hungarian nobles, still more cherished, is the freedom from taxation which they enjoy. To pay a tax in Hungary has so long been the duty of the peasant only, that it has come at last to be considered servile and degrading. It is true that the Diet, at the coronation of the king and queen, votes an *honorarium*, which is paid entirely by the nobles; and in like manner, in time of war it has often voted extraordinary subsidies from the nobles; but these have always been received as favours by the Crown, not demanded as matters of right. The legal fiction on which this right is founded,—that they serve

their king in war,—is not tenable for a moment; indeed, it would much better apply to the peasant class, from which the whole sixty thousand efficient troops are now drawn.* But although it is impossible to advocate the right of any one class of men to the enjoyment of privileges at the expense of the rest of the community, and although we cannot therefore say that it is just that the Hungarian nobles should pay no tax, yet we do feel that the more enlightened of them have some show of reason on their side when they declare that they will only yield up the privilege on obtaining a direct influence on the expenditure of the revenue; in other words, a budget and a responsible ministry. As for the arguments of the less enlightened,—the men who ask, "What need have we to pay taxes?"—"Is not the dignity of the Crown amply provided for by the revenues of the Crown?"—"Are not the troops for foreign service finished and supported by the peasantry, and do not the peasantry live on our lands?"—"and are not we ready at any time to come forward in defence of our country?"—we have no sympathy for them. The Austrian exchequer, it is well known, is, and has been for centuries, in a miserably low state; and, there are no arts—except those of enlightened policy and honest administration—which have not been put in practice to improve it. The Hungarians claim the right of a free import and export on the payment of a five per cent. duty, and the right has been as solemnly acknowledged as it was possible to have been by royal oaths; yet, in spite of this, no sooner did the Austrian dynasty ascend the throne of Hungary, than a system of indirect taxation was begun, which has gone on increasing to the present moment, when almost every article imported from any other country than Austria pays a duty of sixty per cent. The effects of this system I shall allude to hereafter; I mention it now to show that the Hungarian nobles are taxed most heavily, and in a manner, too, which leaves them no control over either taxation or expenditure, and which produces ten times more evil than the small profit arising from it is worth. Whenever Austria is reproached with this, she always pleads necessity, and the refusal of the Hungarian nobles to contribute in any more direct manner to the burdens of the state. It is time that this paltry policy was laid aside on the one hand,

* Nor do I think that this is any modern innovation, for the very meaning of the word *Húszár* (Hussar) is derived from *húsz* (twenty;) because, by an act of the Diet in 1458, every twenty peasants throughout Hungary were obliged to furnish one horse-soldier properly equipped for service.

and on the other. Let the Hungarian Diet solemnly pledge itself to contribute its share to the revenues whenever the king shall grant sufficient guarantees for their just expenditure, and Austria would then be forced to give up a system which, while it crushes Hungary to the ground, is beneficial to none, save the smuggler and the hungry and dishonest bureaucrat.

The monopoly of the sale of wine, bread, and meat, which every noble enjoys within his own villages, is more injurious to the country, and more vexatious to the other classes, than even the non-payment of taxes; but we shall postpone the consideration of this subject till we come to speak of the municipal institutions, where its discussion will be more appropriate.

If the law has made no distinction in the constitutional rights of the nobles, custom has established in their social position as marked gradations as are to be found in the various classes of society of any other country. The Hungarians maintain, I believe, that the titled nobles date only from the accession of the House of Hapsburg to the throne, and that the magnates of former times were only so from their position as Barons and Counts of the kingdom, that is, great officers of the court, and governors of the counties. Even the very titles themselves, *Gróf* and *Báro*, are borrowed from the German *Graf* and *Baron.**

Be this as it may,—at present they are divided socially into three classes: the magnates, answering to our peers; the untitled nobles, a middle class, answering to our gentry; and the "one house nobles," men possessing the hereditary rights of nobility, but in every other respect—in property, education, and manners—little above the peasant.

* It is well known that these titles are now regularly sold by the Austrian court. I believe the common price of a Count's title is 5000*l.*, that of a Baron only 2000*l.* It will be recollected that Stulz—that prince of London tailors—was created a Baron in the list of Austrian nobles for the consideration of 10,000*l.*! The heraldic distinction of nobility is a coronet. That of a Count bears eleven balls; of a Baron, seven; and of a gentleman, two balls and three leaves, something like that of our Marquis. The homagium, or fine for murder, of a magnate, was fixed, at a very early period, at four hundred florins, *c.m.*; that of a gentleman, at two hundred; and that of a peasant, at forty. I need scarcely add, that, though this homagium still exists, it is not a composition for murder, as some German writers would fain have us believe, when they say an Hungarian noble pays forty florins for murdering his peasant. Murder, be the rank of the party what it may, is punished by death, the homagium being added, as a kind of deodand, to the capital punishment.

Among the magnates may be found the most polished and refined manners, and the most elaborate education. Many of them, besides enjoying the advantages of domestic tutors of different nations, spend some years in a foreign university and in foreign travel. Their estates, for the most part of immense extent, if yielding them less revenue (rarely exceeding 10,000*l.*) than many of our peers possess, enable them, from the greater cheapness of living, to enjoy full as many luxuries. The splendid scale on which some of the establishments in Hungary are formed, the number of servants and horses kept,—the two great marks of superabundant wealth,—are scarcely equalled amongst us.

Yet it is from this class Hungary has the least to hope for the advancement of her institutions, and the maintenance of her nationality. To the proud and wealthy, the attractions of a court, where their magnificence may find worthy rivals and admirers, are generally irresistible; but they are only dangerous when they remove them far from those with whom their interests and duties ought naturally to bring them into association. It is unfortunate that such is the case in Hungary. Vienna is essentially German: and although Pest may claim all the other attractions of a capital, its palace has never tempted the Emperor to hold his court there; nor has policy allowed his representative, the Palatine, to assume a splendour which, by creating a personal popularity, might render him obnoxious to the charge of ambition. The wealthier magnates, therefore, flock to Vienna; and absenteeism here, as elsewhere, has not produced kindly feelings, either in the deserters or the deserted. In the one, the repetition of sneers from those they would imitate, against turbulence and barbarism, has led to a disgraceful neglect of political duties, and an affected contempt for the less wealthy and polished of their fellow-countrymen; while in the other a bitter animosity has been engendered, which it requires the greatest exertions of the prudent to restrain within due bounds.

Nor is the absentee magnate always the gainer, either in importance or respectability, by his expatriation. The rich Hungarian often renders himself a fair butt for the smart sallies of the Vienna witlings. Who that has been at Vienna does not know Count Crachat?—a pompous peer, who, on coming to his large fortune, was tempted to Vienna by the smiles of the court; whose wealth made it desirable to retain him in the capital; whose influence it was thought might be dangerous at home; and from whom an insignificant employment, and the glittering bau-

ble which hangs on his breast, have bought forgetfulness of his native land. Aping the expensive follies of richer men, for which he is only laughed at; ambitious of the honours of office, and finding himself put off with a mere nominal dignity; toiling for distinction in the fickle world of fashion, and being dubbed "*le dandy sauvage*" for his pains,—poor Crachat, half ruined and supremely ridiculous, still thinks himself a very great man. He affects surprise how Hungarian gentlemen can speak the same barbarous language as the peasantry; wonders how the people spend their time who live in the wilds of Hungary; considers the Liberals very noisy troublesome fellows who do not know what they want, and the Diet itself a great bore. As for Pest, he supposes it is something like a large village; has heard that robbery and murder are so common that it is unsafe to walk the streets; is shocked at the dreadful state of its society, and laments the lot of some poor relatives who are condemned to dwell there! —And from the same class what a glorious contrast might be drawn! an honourable name, an active patriotism, a pride of nationality, softened by a refined education, and directed by practical good sense! To such a picture I could prefix a dozen names, —and those not fictitious like that of poor Crachat.

Among the magnates we must expect the most striking exceptions from the ordinary standard, whether of good or of evil; but it is to the second class, the landed gentry, that the country must look as her main stay and support. With less refinement of manners, and less of that easy address which nothing but living in the world can give, with a less extended education, especially in modern languages, and with perhaps less freedom from national prejudices, the untitled nobility still possess a much greater knowledge of their country, and a much better will to maintain its rights and improve its institutions, than the more brilliant magnates. In the capital they cannot rival the elegance and splendour of the great Counts and Barons; but in the country, surrounded by all those objects which render the life of the country gentleman the happiest in the world, there are few characters more respectable than that of the *Tekintetes Ur* (respectable sir) of Hungary. Though less polished than the same class in our own country, I can assure the reader they have many of the same characteristics. The country squiries of half a century back,—the Squire Westerns, ay, and Tom Joneses, too,—might easily find their counterparts in Hungary. Except in England, I know of no other country where this class can be said to exist; where

men of property, from a love of the country and its manly amusements, prefer it as a residence for the whole year, to the greater comforts and luxuries of the town. It must not be concealed, however, that among some of the members of this class in Hungary there is a mass of prejudice, and an obstinate adherence to antiquated privileges, which, if it once saved the constitution from destruction, now threatens sometimes to stifle the young efforts of reform.

There is occasionally to be found among them, too, a coarseness of manner, which was the more annoying to us, because the elders believed it to be of English origin, and attributed it to the spread of Liberal notions; indeed, I am not quite sure that there was not some idea of *sansculotism* mixed up with it. I have heard of some young Liberal noblemen, a few years since dressing like peasants, living in their cottages, and associating with them on terms of equality; but I never saw any thing of the kind, and I always suspected a rustic amour or some such cause to have been at the bottom of these pranks. Even at the present day, however, a greater elegance of manner is still desirable.

Of the *Egy házy Nemes Ember* (one house noble,) or *Fél-sarkantyús* (half-spurred) or *Bocskoros* (sandalled,) as they are nicknamed, I know little, as they rarely speak German, and we had seldom occasion to meet with them. They are chiefly Protestants, and very strongly attached to their faith.*

Ignorance and poverty, united to the enjoyment of exclusive privileges, do not offer the most happy combination for the development of the best parts of the human character; but yet they have by no means extinguished all its brighter qualities amongst these men. The Half-spurs, it is true, are generally a proud, unruly, hard-drinking set of fellows, with higher notions of privilege and power than of right and justice; but they are brave, patriotic, and hospitable in the highest degree. I remember once seeking shelter in the house of one of this class, when the snow and darkness had rendered our further progress impossible that night. Right gladly were we received. The mother, with her son and daughter-in-law and their children, occupied a cottage of only three rooms, besides the kitchen and out-houses. There were two neighbours, living some twenty miles off, of the same class, who had dropped in, like ourselves, unexpectedly; and, though the accommodation was rather scanty, they managed to

* The magnates are almost entirely Catholics, the gentry chiefly Protestants, and the lower nobles commonly of the same religion.

provide beds for us all. A good and plentiful supper,—a man must be very poor in Hungary who cannot give his guest an abundant meal,—of several dishes, in which chickens baked and chickens boiled cut a prominent figure, washed down by strong wine, soon put the whole party at their ease. Of Hungarian I unfortunately knew nothing, and they were very indifferent Germans; but the wine helped conversation, and served instead of a dictionary. They pledged us in deep bumpers,—asked us if wine was made in England,—declared we were right good fellows and worthy to be Hungarians,—vowed we should pay them each a visit in turn,—nay, swore they would take the wheels off the carriage, and never let us out of the house till we could speak Hungarian as well as the best Magyar amongst them.

Of these three grades of nobility, making a population of half a million, is formed the real constituency of Hungary.*

It is difficult to calculate how many voters there are in this number; but as the sons have the right to vote during the life of the father, as soon as they arrive at age, and as widows may send their deputies, I think we may state one-fourth, or 125,000, as about the probable number. The whole population of Hungary proper may be reckoned at 10,000,000, so that the proportion of the represented is one in twenty, if the number of adult males only be considered; or one in seventy-five, if the whole population be taken. Now in France the population is 30,000,000; the number of electors is, or was in 1836, 200,000; leaving a proportion of only one in a hundred and fifty. In England, since the reform act, with a population of 25,000,000, the number of voters has been stated at nearly 1,000,000, or one in twenty-five; but, before the reform, I doubt if the proportion of the represented to the unrepresented was greater than in Hungary. Now, though I do not mean to compare the qualification of birth with that of property,—though I believe the sole advantage consists in that the one is acquirable and the other not,—I have been anxious to show the English reader that it is not so small a proportion of the whole which governs in Hungary as we are led to believe when we hear it called an aristocracy,—not so small as governs

* I have not included in this estimate the clergy, citizens, and inhabitants of the Haiduk towns,—all privileged classes, and sending members to the Diet; because the right of vote of their members is disallowed, and I consider them as at present excluded. They do not amount to less than 800,000, and, if taken into the calculation, would far out-number in proportion the voters of almost every country in Europe.

in democratic France at the present moment; and as for the argument that the nobles as a class have the power to oppress the peasantry, and that the interests of the one, when opposed to the interests of the other, are sure to be sacrificed, it seems to be so nearly the same case as that of the rich and poor with us, that it is hardly worth speaking of.

It would be an unpardonable sin not to give a particular description of the Hungarian uniform; for, after the language, it is one of the most cherished of the Magyar's nationalisms; and is considered so essential to his rank, that I believe the more ignorant scarcely believed us when we told them, that, as English gentlemen, we had no uniform. It has undergone its changes, however, as well as other things; and its history is almost a type of the people's. In early days it smacked strongly of Turkish taste in the gaiety of its colours, and the quantity of jewels with which it was loaded; during the reign of Joseph it received a most unnatural and Frenchified cut, and the coat and its wearers were very near losing their nationality together: it has now again assumed its antique proportions and original form; and, while all its peculiar beauties are preserved, its uncouth inelegancies have been softened down by the simple and refined taste of the present century. It now consists of the *Attilla*, a frock-coat, reaching nearly to the knee, with a military collar, and covered in front with gold lace; over this is generally worn, hanging loosely on one shoulder, the *Mente*, a somewhat larger coat, lined with fur, and with a fur cape. It is generally suspended by some massive jewelled chain. The tight pantaloons and ankle-boots, with the never-failing spurs, form the lower part. The *Kalpak*, or fur cap, is of innumerable forms, and ornamented by a feather fastened by a rich brooch. The white heron's plume, or aigrette, the rare product of the southern Danube, is the most esteemed. The neck is open, except for a black ribbon loosely passed round it, the ends of which are finished with gold fringe. The sabre is in the shape of the Turkish scimitar: indeed richly ornamented Damascus blades, the spoils of some unsuccessful Moslem invasion, are very often worn, and are highly prized.

The sword-belt is frequently a heavy gold chain, such as our ancient knights wore over their armour. The colours, and in many respects the form, of the Hungarian uniform depend entirely on the taste of the individual, and vary from the simple blue dress of the hussar, with white cotton lace, to the rich stuffs covered with pearls and diamonds, of the Prince Esterházy.

On the whole, I know of no dress so handsome, so manly, and at the same time so convenient. It is only on gala days that gay and embroidered dresses are used; on ordinary occasions, as sittings of the Diet, county meetings, and others in which it is customary to wear uniform, dark colours with black silk lace,—like that formerly worn by our officers in undress,—and trowsers, or Hessian-boots, are commonly used. Many of the old school wear this dress constantly, while others follow the rest of the world in imitating England; nay, so much is Anglomania now the mode, that a fashionable tailor of Pest never dreams of pleasing his customers without assuring them he makes their coats according to the last pattern received from London.

CHAPTER XV.

THE NORTHERN CARPATHIANS.

The Carpathians.—The Krivan.—The Lomnitzer Head.—Schmöcks, a Bathing-place.—Excursion to the Valleys of the Kahlbach, and Five Lakes.—A Country Gentleman of the Old School.—Hungarian Freedom compared with English.—A Chamois Hunt.—A Scene in the Mountains.—The Jägers, and their Story of the Bear and the Wood-ranger.—Kesmark and the Tökölys—The Zipser Protestants.—Caraffa's Persecutions.—Mysterious Adventure at Leutschau.

From Presburg, where the Danube enters Hungary, to Orsova, where it leaves it, one unbroken chain of mountains bounds the western, northern, and eastern limits of the kingdom. In this course, two great mountain offsets are formed: one between the north and west portion, extending on the east nearly to the Theiss; the other comprising the whole of Transylvania. In the valley of the Waag we were constantly enclosed between branches of the western chain; at Schemnitz we were in the midst of the western offset; and we are now about to visit the highest part of the northern range, the Tatra.

On resuming the course of our travels after this digression, I shall at once transport the reader, without pausing to describe the route, from Kremnitz to the foot of the Krivan, a short distance only from Hradek. This Krivan is one of the noblest mountains I ever saw. It is not the absolute elevation of a mountain which impresses the beholder, so much as its position, form, and height, relative to surrounding objects. Though not more than seven thousand eight hundred feet above the level of the sea the Krivan rises so immediately from the plain, with its conical form and fine rocky summit, and towers so gloriously above all its neighbours, that it gave me a finer idea of a vast mountain than any other I had before seen. We spent the night at Vichodna, a small village at its base, in hopes either of making some arrangements for an ascent the next day, or, what would have been still better, for joining a great chamois hunt, which we had heard was to take place on the mountain in the course

of a week. In both respects we were disappointed; the hunt was deferred *sine die;* and the clouds, which we had so much admired the day before, as they hung lightly round the hoary monarch's head, or occasionally rolled down his sides, or leaving the fine peak clear, now so completely obscured the whole mountain, that we could not even get an outline of its form.

Though the middle of August was scarcely past, we began to feel the cold mountain blasts most painfully; nor could all our coverings keep us warm as we pushed on towards Lomnitz.

The highest of the Tatra range, the Lomnitzer Spitze, (head,) as the Germans call it, was now directly before us; and we determined to penetrate some of its recesses, and to see something of its hidden, almost unknown beauties.

The lord of these bleak territories entertained us most hospitably, and put us in the way of accomplishing our wishes. About ten miles from Lomnitz, and just at the foot of the mountain, there is a little bathing-place, called Schmöcks; and here it was determined that we should take up our abode, and visit the neighbouring wonders at our leisure. Considerable doubts were expressed as to the possibility of our carriage arriving at its destination; but, as they said others had preceded it, I ventured to try. Surely, never was a more uncouth road formed; it was impossible to sit over it, and nothing less than Stephan's skill in hanging to the wheels could have kept the carriage up.

Just at the rise of the mountain, and in a thick forest of pines, of which it may be said to form a part,—for it is built of pine trees, and roofed with shingles of the same material,—we found Schmöcks, a pretty little settlement, which would not be out of place among the squatters of North America.

The pretensions of Schmöcks to be called a bathing-place rest on the possession of two or three cold springs, said to contain carbonic acid gas, magnesia, and a little carbonate of iron; and which, among other excellent qualities, have the reputation of giving a glorious appetite. The wooden *châlets*, though rude in appearance, form no bad lodging-rooms: a good restaurateur is always ready to satisfy the appetite which the waters create; and the whole place, laid out with some little taste, and affording a splendid view over the valley below, is pleasant enough for a short visit. I believe it is more frequented by the healthy than the sick; for, as a starting point to visit the Lomnitz Head and the valleys of the Carpathians, it is decidedly the best that can be f[illegible] We found a large and sociable party collected in

this mountain nook, to some of whom we were immediately introduced. Among others was the Countess C——, who, on hearing that our route would lead us by her house, with that hospitality of which we had such frequent proofs, insisted on our making it our resting-place as long as was agreeable to us. As we joined the common table at supper, some hungry travellers came in, who had just returned from a two days' excursion, during which they had mounted the Spitze, and descended on the other side. They did not give a very favourable account of the expedition; for after the difficulty and danger of the ascent, which they represented as considerable, had been overcome, they were unable to remain more than a few minutes on the summit, on account of the intense cold. The people here say, that, of those who attempt the ascent, very few persevere to the end. There is nothing, however, but a good-will and a stout pair of legs needed: of actual danger there is little, except in case of mists, which are rather common. We had promised to go up if Professor S—— joined us; so that we left the undertaking to the last, half in hopes he would not keep his appointment.

Before supper was over, a second party came in from chamois hunting. One fine two-year old buck was all their bag contained; but even that is considered good sport with such shy game.

Next morning, provided with a guide, and accompanied by a young artist who was murdering the beauties of nature here, we started for an excursion to the lesser Kahlbacher valley and the Fünf Seen (Five Lakes,) two points which all agreed in recommending as the best worth seeing. For the first half-hour, we proceeded by a gentle ascent which brought us to the top of a hill overlooking the great Kahlbacher valley, into which we descended rapidly by a broken foot-track to a small bridge which crosses the Kahlbach, where it forms a pretty waterfall; and then following the valley lying between the Lomnitzer Spitze on one side, and the Königs Nase (King's Nose) on the other, we arrived at the opening of the lesser valley. A strange wild scene that valley presented! The blasted pine, the huge masses of shapeless rock, and the angry fretful stream seemed the sole denizens of its solitude. A little further on, the elevation we had reached became evident from the gradual diminution of vegetable growth; nature seemed subdued by the cold blasts from the neighbouring snow mountains, and the plants had shrunk before the winds they were too feeble to resist. A little further

and no vegetation rises more than three or four feet above the surface; while the only tree which grows is a pine, much like the Scotch fir in leaf, but which, instead of raising itself in the air, spreads its branches in a bush-like form along the ground. This the peasants call the *Krumm Holz* (deformed wood.) Many beautiful plants may still be found; among others, a tussilago, some rare edums, a gentian, one or two grasses, and an abundance of mosses.

In this valley is the place where the night is usually passed previous to ascending the *Spitze;* for which purpose accident has provided an excellent chamber, as a huge sheet of granite has fallen in such a manner as to afford a covering for half a dozen persons. Directly above this point towers the Lomnitzer Head, so clear to-day that it did not seem an hour's walk from us, though it requires at least six or seven to accomplish it.*

The road pointed out by our guide is nearly perpendicular, and lies in a watercourse filled with loose stones. The worst part of our walk ere we reached the Five Lakes was yet to come. Just before us lay a steep ascent covered with fragments of granite of every size from that of a house to a mere pebble, all loose, and rolling from their places with the slightest touch. Though of no great height, it occupied us a good hour, and cost us torn hands and broken shins to master it; but it was worth the cost, for, the top once attained, and we found ourselves in the wildest spot that nature ever formed, or imagination ever pictured. Before us was a high range of peaks called the *Polnishir Kamm* (Polish comb,) the boundary line between Gallicia and Hungary; above these, on the right, the Lomnitzer Spitze reared his head; while on the left was a gigantic wall of granite, apparently separated by some great convulsion of nature from the neighbouring mountain, and standing erect among the broken masses which are every day falling around it. This huge cliff was to me striking in a degree beyond my power to describe; and much as I had before seen of mountain scenery, this was the first really great cliff I had ever looked upon, and it more than equalled all my imagination had pictured. On one side two rocks had been thrown together, in such a position as to form a natural bridge, and its slender outline gave additional effect to the dizzy precipice. The foreground was worthy of the rest of the picture; huge granite

* I give the elevation of some of the points I mention, as I find them laid down in Schmidl: Schmöcks, 2065 feet; Valley of the Five Lakes, 63[redacted]omnitzer Spitze, 8133.

blocks, in some parts covered with snow, in others by a dwarf grass and moss, with the cold green waters of the five lakes which give their name to the valley, were all that sparing nature has bestowed on this desert spot.

As we turned our back on this desolate scene, the contrast was most striking: below us lay the Kahlbacher valley, through which we had just passed, and whose stunted vegetation seemed luxuriant by the contrast with what was before us; and still further on was the rich plain scattered over with towns* and villages, yellow with fresh-cut corn, and varying its shades at every moment as the fleecy clouds passed across the bright blue sky. The wind blew so excessively cold from the snow, that, although well cloaked, we could not support it for any length of time. As H——, who had wandered away with his sketch-book, did not return, I became anxious for his safety; and it was not till we had searched some time that we found him seated in a patch of snow, his body wrapped in his cloak, and his mind in his sketch, his face bluer than the mountains he was drawing, and his pipe, whose curling wreaths still lent perfume to the air, the only sign of existence about him. We left the valley of the Five Lakes just in time to escape a drenching; for the heavy black clouds suddenly collected on the Lomnitzer Spitze, and, rolling down the mountain, completely filled the upper valley with darkness, and then overflowing its sides, seemed to follow our footsteps down the steep declivity. Once in the Kahlbacher valley,

* The history of some of these towns is curious, and illustrative enough of the former state of Hungary. Sigmund, whose reign was marked by the loss of so many provinces previously attached to Hungary,—Bessarabia, Moldavia, Dalmatia, and Bosnia, and Halitsch and Wladimir in Gallicia,—when pressed for money to carry on a war against the Venitians, pledged thirteen towns and three estates, commonly called the *Sechszhn* Zipser Städten,—and among which were some of those we were looking on,—to Wladislaus Jagjel, King of Poland, for the loan of 7,400 florins.

Grating as this was to the national pride, and notwithstanding the frequent remonstrances of the Diet, no King of Hnngary had found sufficient leisure, or had ever had a sufficient sum at his disposal, to redeem this royal pledge. In the reign of Leopold I., indeed, an Archbishop, Széchenyi, had offered to do it at his own expense, on condition of enjoying the revenues for life, but his proposal was refused; nor was it till 1772, when Russia and Prussia had determined on the dismemberment of Poland, that Maria Theresa laid claim, not only to the Zipser towns, but to Halitsch and Wladimir, lost for more than three centuries, as well as to Oswieczin and Tator, to which no claim but that of spoliation could possibly be laid. Of course they were readily granted; Hungary recovered her towns, and Austria became the partner in a crime which she is as yet only beginning to repent.

however, and we were safe; the warm sides of the mountain threw a reflected heat into the valley, which dissipated the mists, and shed on us a delightful warmth after the cold we had lately been exposed to.

In the whole of our walk we had observed no rock but granite; indeed, we were told that the whole of the Tatra range is composed of granite. In the Kahlbacher valley some efforts at mining had been made; and it is said that a good vein of copper ore was found, which yielded abundantly, but it was abandoned from want of capital.

At supper we had but a small party: most of the guests of the previous day had left, and their places were scantily filled by an elderly gentleman and his son and daughter-in-law; the latter a pale and interesting person, who had come to make a short trial of the effects of the mountain air, and invigorating waters of Schmöcks on her declining health. The conversation soon became general; and the old gentleman, who was of the true Magyar cast, and did not like new-fangled ideas and foreign fashions, but stuck to the good old dress and manners of his forefathers, soon began to intimate the superiority of Hungary to England, and every other country on the face of the earth. "Am I not free? Can't I do what I like? Who dare enter my court?" he burst out, as I began to question his right to boast so loudly. "Have not we every thing men can desire? Have not we," counting on his fingers,—"have not we plains and mountains,—and woods and meadows,—gold, silver, copper, and iron, —wood, linen, and silk,—beef, game, and fish,—wine, corn, and tobacco?—there is nothing but coffee and sugar wanting, and those we could have if we chose to grow them! Where is there another country like this? as we say in Latin,

> 'Felix ergo Hungaria,
> Cui dona data sunt varia!'

Nur," he added in a more modest tone, "*Nur, kein Geld haben wir nicht*," only we have got no money.

I like these old-fashioned fellows! They may have a little more prejudice and pride than is absolutely necessary, but there is always something manly and honest about them; they remind me of our own leather-breeched squires,—a fine hard-headed race, whose places are often but poorly filled by their more polished sons. When our old friend, however, would persist in praising the freedom of the Hungarian, in disparagement of what

he called the thraldom endured by the Englishman, my nationality fairly got the better of my good manners, and I could not resist the temptation to mystify him a little. Accordingly, I feigned to yield to his arguments; and we lamented together that people should be so foolish as to think themselves free in a country where the gentry paid taxes,—"though to be sure," I added, "they have a voice in the disposing of them;" where the noble could not pass along the public roads without being stopped for toll,—"though it could not be denied that the roads were pretty good;" where a police was suffered to parade openly through the whole country,—"though it was certain it interfered only with rogues;" where an impertinent press could meddle with every body and every thing,—"though it might possibly be useful in checking an abuse of power; where, in short, no man could get into debt without being made to pay, or could flog his own peasant without being put in prison!" At such a climax the old gentleman groaned in spirit, and, I believe, really felt sorry for us; but it was amusing to see how the eyes of the fair invalid brightened up as my enumeration of the Englishman's miseries increased, and how mischievously she smiled at the profound mystification of her male friends.

Our landlord at Schmöcks, who was a good-tempered merry fellow, and withal a keen sportsman, had told me such glorious tales of chamois and roe hunts, and had hinted so strongly the possibility of rousing a bear in the neighbouring woods, that I took fire, and begged he would, if possible, arrange a *Jagd* (hunt) for us the next day. Nothing could have suited his inclination better: and, though it was late at night, orders were forthwith issued in the kitchen for sundry fowls to be slaughtered, hams to be boiled, and wine and brandy to be safely stowed in strong bottles; while messengers were sent off to all the villages within ten miles' distance, to collect the most renowned huntsmen—alias vagabonds—in the country to aid in the hunt. Accordingly, almost as soon as it was daylight, and long before we had slept off the fatigues of our mountain-walk, the sound of men and horses, with the snapping off of rifles under the windows, roused us from our slumbers.

The party consisted of ourselves and the landlord, and some eight or ten *Jägers*. After due consultation, it was determined to beat the mountain bounding the Völker valley, a spot about two hours to the west of Schmöcks; and thither accordingly we repaired, some on rough mountain ponies, the rest on foot. In

due time we issued from the pine forest, through which our route at first led us; and struck into a wild valley differing little from that of yesterday, though it was perhaps more barren and less picturesque. As in the other, the bottom was covered with rocks and dwarf pine, while the sides were closely hemmed in by precipitous cliffs. A small lake, fed by a waterfall of no great size at the upper end of the valley, was the throw-off; and there we all collected to receive instructions from our chief huntsman, no longer the landlord, but a gray-bearded peasant, who probably knew better than the chamois themselves where they were to be found, and where they would go to when roused.

The plan of action was laid down thus:—The landlord and ourselves were to ascend a distant part of the mountain, at a point where it was particularly steep and dangerous, and to which the chamois would consequently go for safety. There, perched on some point where we could not be seen, and near which the only pathway accessible even to the chamois passed, we were to sit till the game came near. The jägers and treibers (drivers) in the mean time were to make a cast round the other side of the mountain, and, by means of shouting and firing powder, to drive the game in our direction; which would then pass within shot of us, as the rocks are so perpendicular that it is only in a few places there is footing for it. The prospect of sitting some hours on a peak of the Carpathians, perhaps up to the knees in snow, and certainly exposed to a cold and cutting wind, without daring to speak or move, not to mention the two hours' climbing required to reach this enviable position, or the great probability of disappointment where such shy game was concerned, was scarcely tempting; but highland hunters think all other sport poor in comparison. These men have a dreamy and poetical endurance in their method of hunting, which we, impatient lowland sportsmen, have no idea of. I respect the feeling, and acknowledge in it a genuine love of sport; but I never could acquire it, my blood grows cold with such long expectings.

We were not, however, to be tried, at least to-day, for, as we were waiting till the last of the jägers came up, and the final orders were given, some flakes of snow fell from a dark cloud which was hanging on the top of the Polnischer Grath, and were soon followed by a heavy shower, which at once put a stop to our proceedings,—for the danger of climbing the rocks when slippery from the recent snow, was more than even the hardy [illegible] dared to undertake. It was the more provoking, as a

Polish peasant who had crossed over the mountain from Gallicia, for the sake of gathering the gentian root, which grows in great abundance here, told us he had seen four head of chamois cross the valley in the direction of our intended beat only half an hour before we entered it.

Our landlord was not one of the despairing kind, however, and, as the mountains refused us a chamois, he determined to beat the woods for a roe; and accordingly one of the jägers was speedily despatched for some hounds to help the sport. In the mean time the snow storm continued, and our first care was to seek shelter. Luckily, a favourite resort of the goatherds was near at hand,—a huge block of granite forming a natural cave, under which we all crept without difficulty, and lay much at our ease. The jägers in the mean time employed themselves in lighting a fire, and preparing for their lunch. A bit of *schwamm*, or German tinder, kindled by the flint and steel with which every peasant is provided for lighting his pipe, and placed in a handful of dry moss, was soon fanned into a flame by being moved quickly through the air; and this having been placed under a living tree, a dwarf pine, inflammable from its turpentine, and the dry spots on which it grows, soon blew up into a goodly blaze. The hatchet-headed walking-sticks were then put in requisition—I do not know whether I have mentioned before, that all the peasants of the north of Hungary carry sticks armed at the top with a small hatchet-head, which I had previously considered only as an ornament, or to be used in defence, but which were now more usefully employed—and a dozen similar trees were soon felled and added to the fire, raising a glorious blaze, which set wind and snow at complete defiance. The scene was most picturesque; the rude figures of the jägers, relieved against the fire as they lay enjoying its warmth, or toasting their bits of bacon on its embers,—the masses of rocks reflecting the bright glare—and, beyond, the blasted pine, and the sharp outlines of the mountain masses now covered with snow, formed a composition worthy of a Salvator's study.

The bottle of Sliwowitz was not forgotten, and, as it passed from mouth to mouth, it seemed to loosen the tongues of those who pressed it, and our companions soon became talkative. They were Germans from an adjoining village,—Lomnitz, Schmöcks, and many villages in this neighbourhood, are peopled by German colonists,—and united two professions which to us would appear rather incompatible,—they are fiddlers and hunts-

men! They had been engaged at a wedding feast in the service of Apollo all the previous night; but when Diana's much-loved summons called them to the woods, fiddles, clarionets, and all, were hastily cast aside, the rusty rifle was thrown gaily over the shoulder, and without sleep or rest they hastened to obey the welcome invitation. Every one had now his tale to tell and his joke to pass. This one had shot a chamois at an unheard-of distance,—the other had tracked a wounded roe I know not how far or how long: but the tale which the jägers took most delight in narrating, was of a wood-ranger and a bear, the incidents of which had occurred only a few weeks previously, and the scene of which we had passed in the morning. As the ranger was quietly pursuing his usual rounds, with his gun unloaded and slung carelessly across his back, he came upon one of those little green glades in the forest—so still, so beautiful, they must be the chosen temples of the sylvan deities!—where a fine young bear stood just before him, busy at an ants' nest, whose treasures he was mercilessly rifling. As Bruin turned round to see who was the intruder on his feast, the trembling ranger unslung his piece, and, hastily loading it, discharged it close to the bear's nose. What was his surprise when, instead of beholding the beast stretched at his feet as he expected, he saw him quietly trot away unharmed!—what was his shame when it struck him, that in his fright he had forgotten to load his piece with any thing but powder!—Long and loud did the jolly jägers laugh at the wood-ranger's cowardice.

As the conversation became free, they asked us many questions about England, and were very anxious to know something of our peasants—how many days' *robot* they worked—how they lived—and what taxes they paid? I assured them that our peasants lived better than they did—for they had told me that potatoes and bread was their ordinary fare, and a bit of bacon a luxury; but that they worked much harder to gain it.

"But English peasants don't labour so many days for their lord as we do."

"Nor have they each a portion of land, as you have."

"What! no land? How can they live, then?"

It was no easy matter to make them understand the system of landlord and tenant, workman and employer, as existing with us; so closely was the idea of *Bauer* and *Bauerngrund* (peasant and peasants' land) associated in their minds. When I told them of th[illegible] of our farmers, and of their respectable station in

society, and at the same time explained to them that they had no right in the land they occupied, and might be dismissed at will, I believe they thought I was romancing. Nor were they less surprised to hear that the women commonly stay at home when the men go out to work; for they confessed that their own wives did much more than themselves, and that they belaboured them heartily if they did not obey their orders. For the credit of England, I did not mention how terribly the husbands are henpecked with us, for fear they should think too lowly of them; of which, I believe, there was some danger, when they heard of hard work and no land.

But the hounds had arrived, and the old huntsman blew his huge cow-horn, and summoned us to the field. The pack was composed of two couple and a half of coarse harriers, which were intended to aid in beating the wood, in giving notice of the direction the game took, and in bringing it back to the place from which it had first broke cover. As for the hounds killing the game, that was never dreamed of; the guns were intended to perform that office. The old huntsman with his hounds started off to the extremity of the wood, while we were directed to take up our places at certain points where the game would be most likely to pass. I was directed to the highest point:—"There, just where the dwarf wood commences, behind that rock you can conceal yourself; the roe will probably cross the mountain, pass this open brake as he descends, and come first within the range of your gun." At distances of about a quarter of a mile from each other, the rest took up their stations, and all were still with expectation. Full two hours, resting on my gun behind that said rock, had I amused myself with listening to every falling leaf, and fancying it the starting of a deer,—the diversion being every now and then varied by the pelting of a smart hailstorm,—when at length I thought I caught the sound of a distant horn. I was right enough, it was the huge cow-horn of our old huntsman I recognised; his clear shrill voice, too, as he cheered on the hounds, soon became audible, and then grew more and more distinct; but, with the best will, not a cry could I distinguish from the hounds, they were mute as death; and, in despair, I saw them one after another come quietly over the brow of the mountain, beating the thickets on either side,—but, alas! in vain. The hunt was *out*, as the jägers said; the roe must have left the wood: and as it was now evening, and we were wet through, we were

glad enough to mount, and gallop as fast as our horses could carry us in the direction of Schmöcks.

A warm bath, a good dinner, a fair quantity of Tokay, and a wood fire in our snug little wood cottage, soon consoled us for the disappointments of the day, and sent us very comfortably to bed, though with the full persuasion that a *Gems-jagd* was but very slow sport.

The next morning was so wet and cloudy, and the prognostications of the mountaineers so unfavourable, from the yesterday's fall of snow, as to the probability of more fine weather this year among the Carpathians, that we determined to leave them and seek a more genial clime. I strongly recommend them, however, to the lover of the grand and beautiful. I will not mention what others say of their wonders,—for I have learned in travelling to place little trust in others' eyes; but I have myself seen enough, even in this short visit, to say that there are few mountain chains possessing more wild beauty and more savage grandeur than the Tatra of Hungary.

Our route now lay through the county of Zips, passing the towns Kesmark, Leutschau, and Eperies. In Kesmark there is nothing remarkable, except the ruins of an old castle which formerly belonged to the family Tököly, by whose restless ambition and warlike talents Hungary was involved in a series of civil wars, which, but for Sobiesky's timely aid, would probably have ended in delivering the whole country into the power of the Turks. A curious illustration of the misery inflicted on the peaceable inhabitants of towns, as well by friends as foes, during this disturbed period, is preserved in a journal kept by the judge of the little town of Felka, in this neighbourhood. "1684, March 5th. A council concerning Tatar, (one of Tököly's leaders,) who has seized six thousand men; so must we, thirteen towns, pay five thousand thalers, and convey it to the Lord Tököly in three days, with thirteen wagons.—13th March. Ponevcz is come, and has quartered four hundred cavalry on us, where they remained two nights: next day, sixty men, with one hundred horses.—12th. The same.—14th. The Germans come again, and have cleared the houses out.—16th. Two thousand Germans come back from Liebitz and stayed all night: in my house were eighteen horses and seventeen persons. I was obliged to feed them gratis; and, instead of thanks, they took away my best horse." Further on we read of "five thousand

thalers more to Prince Tököly, on account of those natural enemies, the Tartars and Turks. Four thousand men, two hundred horse, and much goods carried off." And again, "All our horses taken away; from me, six."*

Perhaps no part of Hungary has suffered more from persecutions of every kind than the county of Zips. Peopled in a great part by Germans whose settlement dates from a very early period, and who in every part of Hungary seemed to have adopted with zeal the doctrines of the Reformation, and whose numbers were increased in the fifteenth century by the followers of Huss when proscribed in Bohemia, and in the sixteenth by those of Luther from Saxony, this county suffered from the persecutions and wars to which these doctrines gave rise, perhaps more severely than any other part of Hungary. To those acquainted with Hungarian history it is enough to refer to the *Blutsgericht* (Court of blood) of Caraffa in Eperies. To the foreigner I shall merely say, that Caraffa, with the head of a Jesuit and the heart of an Italian, undertook to repress the Protestants by dint of terror; and he set about the work with such zealous industry, that, by means of outrage and injustice the most flagrant, and rendered more intolerable by the frightful tortures to which he subjected his prisoners, he, if he did not succeed in what he wished, at least obtained a name which is never mentioned in Hungary to this day without horror and disgust.

Leutschau, which we reached a little before sunset, is an old-fashioned German-looking town, with high walls, strong gates, and a fine market-place. After changing horses, and just as we passed out under the Gothic arched gateway, a pretty servant-girl of about eighteen, dressed in her Zipser costume, called to our coachman to stop; and coming up to the carriage, asked in German if we were not going to the Countess C——'s. We answered in the affirmative; when she handed up a large basket of choice flowers, under which were two bottles of Tokay and a letter. Supposing they were intended for the Countess, I deposited them carefully in the carriage, and ordered the peasant to drive on; nor should I have thought more of the matter, had not the address of the letter accidentally caught my eye; it ran thus:—"To the travelling gentlemen, on the road to Countess C——'s castle, at M——." But if a little astonished at the address, what was my surprise on opening the letter, to find a long

* Klein, Geschichte von Ungarn.

epistle in German, written in a female hand, and signed "Unknown;" in which, in the name of "the ladies of Hungary," we, "as the representatives of a free nation," "the compatriots of Shakspeare, Byron, Scott, and Bulwer," were presented with bouquets of flowers and bottles of Tokay, in order to show us the beauty and richness of the land we were visiting, and to strengthen us against the difficulties of our rude journey! With what eyes we looked at each other as we finished this letter I leave the reader to fancy, when he reflects that it came from a person unknown, who had never seen us, and that we received it in a place where we had remained only a few minutes, where we had no acquaintance, and where apparently our very names were unknown.

After the first exclamations of surprise were over, we both dropped into a musing silence, in which I would not swear that soft dreams of conquest, fond visions of youth and beauty, may not perchance have floated across our minds; for, though our fair correspondent had expressly said "she never had seen and probably never should see us," it is hard to check the course of a day-dream when vanity leads the way. But, lack-a-day! dreams will end in waking sadness. Spenser was assuredly right:

> "He is not fit for love,
> Who is not fit to hold it;"

and we, alas! must e'en babble of our bliss when we arrived at M——, and that too before women. Ah, cruel fair!—they insisted on seeing the letter: ah, fatal weakness!—we yielded to their commands. Never shall I forget the wicked smile of the Countess, as the letter was handed back with a thousand felicitations on our good fortune; with repeated assurances that she knew the lady well, though of course "the name was inviolable, but," she added, "I may venture to tell you that she is a person of considerable talent, highly respectable, a great admirer of English literature, and one whose good opinion from her *advanced age* is entitled to great respect!" Poor wounded vanity was at once banished from the scene, and noble patriotism—how oft the last resource of disappointed vanity!—was forced to take its place. We forthwith felt enchanted that our country's fame should have extended to these distant lands, and should have been reflected, however unworthily, on the humblest of her sons!

CHAPTER XVI.

The Church of Kirchdrauf.—Cholera Troubles in Zips.—The Stadt-Hauptmann of Eperies.—Koschau.—Austrian Officers.—Stephan's Dismissal.—Mines of Schmölnitz.—Cementwasser.—German Settlers.—Rosenau.—Mustaches.—Castle of Murány.—Wesselényi's Wooing of Szécsi Maria.—Requisites for Travelling in Hungary.—Cavern of Aggtelek.—A Bivouac.—Miskolcz.—Tokay.—The Theiss.—The Wine of Tokay.

We spent a couple of days very agreeably at M—— in visiting the wonders of the neighbourhood. The old castle of Zips, the stronghold at times of some of the most formidable enemies of Austria,—Zápolya, Bethlen, Rákótzy, and Tököly,—is now a possession of the Csákys, but is fast falling to ruin. Some parts of it exhibit marks of considerable beauty; and, what is rarely the case in Hungary, a pretty chapel is contained within its walls. At Kirchdrauf, not far from the castle of Zips, we visited a beautiful Gothic church, containing some interesting monuments, and belonging to the chapter of that place. In the sacristy were some gold sacramental cups, worked in a style that would not have discredited the chisel of Benvenuto Cellini, and ornamented most richly with precious stones. The old beadle sighed as he showed them, for he said they were nothing to what had formerly been there; "but the Emperor robbed"—yes, the irreverent old beadle, in his zeal for the honour of his church, called the Emperor's borrowing a robbery!—"all the best of them to bribe the Frenchmen to leave Vienna."

We visited one of the jovial *Dom Herrn*, who insisted on our tasting some of the church's Tokay, for these happy prebends have a vineyard on those blessed Hegyalla hills; and excellent, as I can attest, is the fruit thereof, and very fit to comfort a *Dom Herr's* stomach in his old age.

We noticed in many parts of this country, but particularly in this neighbourhood, a great number of gibbets, from each of which several bodies were dangling. It appears that in 1831, when the cholera first broke out in Hungary, the Sclavack peasants of the north were fully persuaded they were poisoned by the nobles, to get rid of them; and they in consequence rose in re-

volt, and committed the most dreadful excesses. The gentleman who related these circumstances to us, had been himself a sufferer. He was seized by the peasants of the village, among whom he had been, up to that moment, exceedingly popular; dragged from his house to the public street; and there beaten for several successive hours, to make him confess where he had concealed the poison. At last, wearied with the trouble of inflicting blows, they carried him to the smithy, and applied hot ploughshares to his feet three different times. As the poor man, exhausted with this dreadful torture, and finding all his entreaties and explanations vain, fell back from weakness, and was apparently about to expire, those beautiful words of our dying Saviour escaped from his lips, "Lord, forgive them, for they know not what they do!"—as by a miracle, the savage rage of the peasantry was calmed. Struck at once with the innocence of the victim, and the enormity of their crime, they fled on every side, and concealed themselves from view. It was now four years since this had happened, and his wounds had healed only within the last month or two. In other parts of the county scenes yet more dreadful occurred. It is pleasant, amid such horrors, to record an act of noble courage on the part of a poor peasant. The Lord Lieutenant, in attempting, without arms, to quiet the assembled crowd in a village not far from where we were staying, was struck from his horse by a stone, when the whole crowd fell upon him to accomplish his death. Fortunately, a poor shoemaker who saw his danger, rushed forward; and throwing himself upon him, declared he would have the pleasure of murdering him himself; but at the same time whispered to the Count that he was in the hands of a friend. Protecting him in this way from the crowd, he imprisoned him in his own cottage till night secured his retreat. I need scarcely add, that Count Csáky rewarded the honest cobbler by a handsome pension for life.

In consequence of these riots, *Stand Recht*,—summary law, by which a man may be tried and executed on the spot where he is apprehended, without even having been put in prison, or allowed to make any preparation for his defence,—was proclaimed, and no less than fifty Sclavack peasants were hung and gibbeted in different parts of the county in consequence. Of course, the barbarism of the people, and the necessity of impressing a wholesome terror on their minds, is the plea urged in extenuation of this horrible exhibition. I leave the reader to decide whether the [illegible] of the judges, and the necessity of satisfying their

feelings of revenge, would not be nearer the truth. How far the desired effect has been produced may be guessed from the circumstance that, every New-year's day, each body receives a new dress from the relatives and friends of the deceased in the neighbouring villages.

I have frequently heard it repeated, and with the strongest assurance of its truth, that this rising was excited by Russian agents, in consequence of the sympathy and aid which the northern counties of Hungary afforded to Poland, and which even the highest Austrian authorities were supposed to have favoured. What credence should be attached to such a report, I know not. In countries where secrecy is the system of government, where the police is responsible only to the minister, and where the press is stifled, rumour assumes an authority and importance quite unknown with us. Here, nothing is more easy than to spread a report, which, true or false, passes from mouth to mouth with the rapidity of lightning; the secrecy in which it is enveloped adding to its terrors, and rendering its refutation impossible.

At Eperies we met with almost the only instance of serious annoyance and incivility which occurred during the whole of our journey through Hungary; and this is the more remarkable, as a somewhat similar adventure, attended with much more disagreeable consequences, happened to our countryman Townson, nearly half a century before, somewhere in the same neighbourhood. While in a public room of the inn, we observed a number of persons passing and repassing before the window, and occasionally coming into the room, evidently with no other object than that of satisfying an ill-mannered curiosity. Our carriage was subjected to a similar inspection; and old Stephan grew very angry at the impertinent questions with which he was pestered. In short, all *Krähwinkel* was in arms to know who and what we were: and I have no doubt a number of the Eperies wise-heads had set us down for spies, although for what object any one should give himself the trouble of spying at Eperies it would be difficult to conceive.

Just as we sat down to table, in marched an orderly and demanded our passports; but as I had been assured such demands were never made in Hungary, and as, in the present instance, I knew it to be merely an act of impertinence, I declined to comply. Nothing more occurred till we were ready to start, the horses harnessed, and wè about to get into the carriage; when a sulky-looking fellow, said to be the *Stadt-Hauptmann*, ordered

out a guard of hussars, commanded them to take out the horses, and, if resisted, to effect it by force. There were now collected a considerable number of the gentlemen of the place, the greater part of whom seemed heartily ashamed of the conduct of their magistrate, and excused him by saying that he had orders to arrest some Polish refugees, and he did not know that we might not be the suspected persons. All this was pure nonsense; but, as we had no desire to remain at Eperies till some of our friends could testify to our identity, we were obliged to unpack our boxes and to search for the luckless passport, for it had not been seen till that moment since we first entered the country. As I presented the passport,—of which, by the by, the Stadt-Hauptmann could not read one word,—I could not resist the pleasure of disburdening myself of some of those disagreeable feelings wihch this act of official* insolence had engendered; and having properly abused the great man, to the no small delight of his fellow-townsmen, we shook off the dust from our feet as a testimony against Eperies, and so departed.

The country through which we passed before arriving at Kaschau, is, like most of the north of Hungary, poor and cold, when compared with the south. Hemp and flax are cultivated in large quantities, and the clothing of the people is made almost entirely from these materials.

Kaschau itself, a town of thirteen thousand inhabitants, is decidedly one of the very prettiest places I know any where. In winter its gaiety is said to rival that of Pest; for, owing to the distance of the northern counties from the metropolis, Kaschau assumes the importance of a second capital, and is much resorted to by the nobles as a winter residence. All the usual consequences of the diffusion of wealth are visible here; handsome houses, well-stocked shops, a good casino, a theatre, and pleasant promenades, are among the outward signs. The greatest ornament of Kaschau, however, is its cathedral. It was begun as early as 1324 by St. Elizabeth, Queen of Hungary, and was brought to its present state by Mathias Corvinus. It is in a chaste Gothic style; in some parts, particularly the west front, exhibiting rich fret-work of great elegance and purity.

In the evening we strolled into the theatre, where a company of Germans were giving *Fra Diavolo* very tolerably; though

* It must be recollected that the magistrates of towns are not freely elected, like those of counties: indeed, in many instances, they deserve to be cons[illegible] higher light than as policemen of Vienna.

the noise kept up by a party of officers, prevented a great part of it from being heard. This offensive manifestation of imagined superiority forcibly recalled the character given of these gentry in a wicked little book, "*Die Ungarn wie sie sind.*" "They look down on the citizens, who not only feed them, but in the hour of danger, when matters can no longer be arranged by a well-stuffed white uniform, devote their properties and lives for their father-land as well as themselves; they talk great of pretty girls, horses, and the service, in coffee-houses and inns; boast of true, or, in case of need, of fancied *bonnes fortunes;* kick up rows (*machen specktakel*) in the theatre; play well at billiards; reason about things they do not understand; criticise their superior officers, and swear they could arrange every thing better from winning a battle to ruling a kingdom."

Witty, however, as this description is, and applicable as in my choler I thought it to the garrison of Kaschau, I am not so unjust as to apply it to the whole body of Austrian officers. Like most other officers, they are apt, I believe, to mistake the swagger of the barrack for the easy manner of good society; but I have generally found them polite, and much less afflicted with the affectations of puppyism than most others of their class. That there is no great sympathy between them and the Hungarians, is beyond a doubt; they are for the most part foreigners—Italians and Germans—who are hated by the Hungarians, and who return that hatred with unconcealed contempt. Among themselves, however, I know no army where there is more kind-heartedness, more good-temper, united to devotion for the service, than in the Austrian army. The pay is miserably small, the uniform simple, the discipline strict, and advancement very slow; yet the Austrian officer is proud of the service, and considers it decidedly superior to every other profession.

From Kaschau to Schmölnitz nothing of much interest occurred, save an outbreak of poor Stephan's failing, which obliged me to part with him on the spot. At Metzenseif, where we stayed for dinner, it was unluckily fast-day, and nothing could be got to eat save a few hard-boiled eggs; and whether from the consequent want of a good foundation for his usual quantum, or whether he had been tempted to an excess, I know not, but we had not travelled far before the old soldier manifested strong symptoms of intoxication, and got into a violent quarrel with the coachman. In vain did I endeavour to check him; he seemed to have lost all command of himself, and became so insolent and

unruly that I was obliged to discharge him next day, though very much to my sorrow. He had excellent qualities, and was besides an original, but the chance of a scene like this in any private house where we might have been staying, was too much to encounter.

At Schmölnitz we were again in a mining district, and I was glad to avail myself of an opportunity I had missed at Neusohl, of seeing the process of extracting copper from the *cementwasser* —water containing a solution of sulphate of copper. The director of the mines, *Berg-rath*, appointed an intelligent young practicant to show me all I desired.

The copper is extracted from the cementwasser by making it pass slowly over inclined wooden troughs, in the whole two hundred and twelve yards in length. These are thickly strewed over with pieces of iron; by which means the sulphuric acid is attracted from the copper, and combines with the iron, forming a soluble sulphate of iron; while the copper, nearly pure, is deposited in a soft state. It is then scraped off the plates of iron, and sent to be roasted. I did not visit the mines, for it was Saturday evening, and almost all the men had left off work for the week.

The district of Schmölnitz, which includes several mines in its neighbourhood, produces annually twelve thousand centners of copper, of which one thousand are said to be obtained from the cementwasser. I find in my note-book thirty thousand marks of silver set down as the produce of Schmölnitz, but I feel convinced it is enormously above the real amount, though I have no means at hand of correcting it. Three thousand is much more probably the true quantity. The amalgamation process is employed here, and is managed in the following manner:—The ore, after being exposed to a slow roasting, is ground down to an impalpable powder, when it is mixed with quicksilver in large wooden barrels, furnished with copper balls, which are kept turning round for twenty-four hours. During this time the silver unites with the mercury, and forms an amalgam, which is then separated from the earthy matter, and afterwards exposed to heat in closed vessels, by which the mercury is driven off. Two per cent. of quicksilver is lost.

There are said to be several mines of quicksilver worked in this district, but, as I did not hear of them till I had left the place, I cannot state the quantity produced, or the manner of working them; I fancy, however, they are unimportant, and

chiefly in the hands of private individuals. The iron mines of this neighbourhood, particularly those of Count Andrásy, are among the best in Hungary. Antimony and lead are also obtained in the Schmölnitz district.

Schmölnitz itself is the prettiest of the mining towns we had yet seen, and the neat and respectable appearance of the people bore evidence of their German origin. On the Sunday morning, as we were preparing to leave, the streets were crowded with well-dressed miners coming from church; the women still retaining their German costume, though the men were all in hussar jackets, and booted and spurred as well as the best Magyar in the country. One pretty girl H—— requested to stand to him a few minutes while he made a sketch: to which she assented with a modesty and grace which would have done credit to a drawing-room. The only part of her dress which was Hungarian were the yellow knee-boots, almost entirely concealed by the length of her gown. It is curious with what pertinacity the peasant women in every part of Hungary retain the costume of their ancestors. A sentiment of shame is attached to a change, especially to any imitation of the higher classes. "It may be very well for a lady to put on such foreign fashions if she likes, but an honest Hungarian peasant girl should wear the same clothes as her grandmother wore before her."

It had become a matter of urgent necessity to supply the place of old Stephan; for we were just on the borders of that part of the country where the Sclavacks and Magyars meet, and where the German language is almost unknown. Fortunately a young miner, who spoke all three languages, was persuaded to accompany us as far as Pest, on condition that his fellow-workmen, with whom he had some contract, would let him off. After waiting some time to allow these arrangements to be effected, our miner appeared, dressed in a very neat dark-blue hussar uniform, his boots well cleaned, his mustache freshly stiffened, and with his broad-brimmed hat in hand ready to do good service. The wages that had tempted him from his home were two shillings a-day.

Our road led us through a finely wooded district, till we arrived on the summit of a hill, below which a beautiful country was spread out before us. It took us two hours to descend this hill, over a road left bad on purpose, I presume, to ease the horses in holding back; for, without this aid, it would be scarcely possible to sustain the weight of a carriage for so long a time.

We passed an old castle belonging to Count Andrásy, still habitable, but spoilt by modern repairs; and, soon after, a village of the same gentleman's, with which no fault could be found. Nowhere had I seen more neat, nay, handsome cottages, provided as they were with large windows and pretty gardens; and the whole looking so neat, and their inhabitants so prosperous, that I could not help envying the man who could say, "This happiness is my work!"

It appeared as if we were now doomed to misfortune; for no sooner had they begun to unpack the carriage at Rosenau, than we perceived that H——'s colour-box, and portfolio, which held all his sketches, and which were contained in a leathern pocket attached to the back of the carriage, were missing, the pocket having apparently worn itself off in consequence of the jolting over a bad road. The first thing to be done was to send back our miner on foot, to endeavour to find it; and, if he should not succeed, to request the magistrates to aid him in his search, and to offer a reward at Schmölnitz for its recovery. Though late in the day, this plan was quickly arranged and at once put in execution; and, as a day or two would be required before he could return, we determined to employ the time in visiting the castle of Murány, a short day's journey from Rosenau.

The Sclavack peasant whom the people of the inn had engaged to take us in his *Leiter-wagen*, which we preferred, on account of the state of the roads, to our own carriage, instead of appearing at five o'clock, the appointed time, was not forthcoming at seven, though he had received a part of the money beforehand. In this dilemma I bethought me of the terror with which the peasants regarded a Haiduk, and accordingly sent to request that one of them might be despatched after the truant. I had hit on the right expedient; for, in a quarter of an hour up came the wagon at full gallop, with the Haiduk in it; nor, when he presented himself to us with his smart uniform, rattling spurs, strong stick, and military swagger, set off by the most exaggerated pair of mustaches I had ever seen, was I much astonished at his success. He might have frightened a greater man than our peasant driver. I do not think I exaggerate when I say his mustaches were more than a foot long from tip to tip, as the ornithologists express it; standing out on each side of his face as stiff, straight, and black as wax could make them. I have heard of several Hungarians who could twist their mustaches round their ears, but I believe this man might have tied his be-

hind his head. This length of mustache is a matter of considerable pride to its possessor; the officers of a regiment of hussars have been known to allow extra pay to a soldier who was very remarkable in this way, to enable him to maintain his mustaches in wax. In no country of Europe is the mustache held in such respect as in Hungary; all, except the clergy,—masters and servants, professors and students, from the highest magnate to the lowest peasant,—cherish with vast affection this hirsute covering of the upper lip. We were even obliged to fall into the custom; for so strongly is the idea of manhood and mustaches associated, that I remember a child exclaiming when she heard that they were not worn in England, "Why, you must all look like great girls then!"

Our road led us through several pretty valleys, watered by clear brooks, and enlivened by the sound of iron-works, and the activity which industry always creates. As we approached Murány, we saw at a considerable distance a huge rock rise precipitously from the valley, which the peasant pointed out as the object of our visit, though we could scarcely perceive the remains of the castle, so small did they appear compared with the stupendous proportions of the rock itself. Just at the foot of the mountain lies the pretty little village of the same name, where a large inn with this inscription over the gateway, "Morantes gaudent Baccho," seemed to promise us good accommodation. We were surprised, therefore, on inquiring for rooms, not only to find that there was none for us, but to receive also very uncivil answers to our questions. We had forgotten that we were travelling in a peasant's wagon, and without a servant; two things so very much below the dignity of an Hungarian gentleman, who always takes his servant with him, if it is only to fill his pipe, and strike a light for him, that the only wonder is they gave us an answer at all. Having at last obtained an unwilling promise that we should at least have some supper, and having found a guide to show us the way, we bent our steps towards the castle.

It required a good hour and a half's climb to gain the summit of that rock. Little now remains of the vast castle itself; except some of the outer walls, the casements, and a few broken towers, it is a complete ruin. We passed up the wide steps cut in the solid rock, and entered by a gateway well defended by double towers, the foundations of which are in the stone itself. The great area, which must contain many acres, was

covered with grass, which had just been mown; and in the centre stood a little summer-house, built for the accommodation of pic-nic parties. Far over distant mountains did the view extend; nothing but rock and wood on every side, save where the impatient rivulet had cut its stony bed, and fertilized its little valley: and well could we believe our guide, as pointing out on every side favourite resorts of the wolf and bear, he exclaimed, "An excellent hunting country this; in winter we are never without wolves, and rarely a summer comes but two or three she-bears drop their cubs in these woods."

So strong a fortress, in the centre of a country so often the scene of civil war, could hardly have escaped sharing in the great events of those times; and we accordingly find the name of Murány frequently occurring in Hungarian history. At one time the Diet complains of it as a harbour for traitors and robbers; at another, a solemn decree of the nation indicates it as the safe-guard of the kingdom, and appoints it as the place where the sacred crown of St. Stephen should be deposited. During the religious wars, when Transylvania under the first George Rákotzy, aided by the Protestants of Germany and the Mohammedans of Turkey, waged almost constant war against the Catholic Emperor and King, the possession of Murány became a point of great importance. Fortune, who loves to play strange tricks, had at this eventful moment placed the fortress in the hands of a woman; but, as if to make amends, it had endowed her with all the qualities of greatness to which our sex commonly lays claim. Szécsi Maria, the Lady of Murány, a young and beautiful widow, educated a strict Protestant, had little difficulty in choosing the party she should adopt; and readily admitted a detachment of Rákotzy's troops to strengthen the garrison of her castle, but only on condition that she herself should retain the command. The king's forces, under the direction of Eszterházy, easily drove the ill-disciplined forces of the Transylvanian leader from their conquests in the open country,—for they had extended their excursions nearly as far as Presburg; but, as long as Murány protected their retreat, their entire subjection was almost hopeless. While therefore he continued his campaign in the plains, he was obliged to detach a strong body of troops under Wesselényi Ferencz to besiege the castle.

As Wesselényi drew up his troops before the fortress, and surveyed all its natural and artificial defences, he almost despaired of effecting its reduction; and, when he heard that Maria

herself commanded the garrison, his despair was imbittered almost to desperation by the thought, his hard-earned laurels would now be tarnished by defeat at the hands of a woman. All the arts of war were expended in vain against the huge mountain fortress; every attempt cost the blood of some of the king's best troops, and served only as amusement to the garrison. A protracted siege rarely improves the discipline of an army, and the news of victories on the side of the enemy were not wanting to discourage the besiegers. Time, too, now pressed; and, as force was still evidently powerless against Murány, Wesselényi at last determined to try what persuasion might effect on its commandress. Disguising himself in the dress of an inferior officer, the general appeared before the gates as bearer of a flag of truce to demand a parley with the mistress of the castle; and cunningly did he talk of favourable conditions and royal rewards, but his opponent only laughed at his offers, as she had done at his threats.

A good general, however, always finds out some weak points in his enemy's defences; and perhaps the eyes of Maria had expressed no displeasure at the handsome face and manly figure of the envoy, nor probably were the beauty and courage of the commandress without their influence on Wesselényi's determination. Certain it is, that next day another trumpet summoned the garrison to a parley, and that this time the herald bore a letter offering the heart and hand of Wesselényi to his beautiful enemy, to whom he confessed the *ruse* he had practised, but vowed that love had taken ample revenge for his temerity.

Caught with the romance, but determined to test its sincerity, Maria answered that if the writer's courage equalled his boldness, and he was willing to pursue the fortune he tempted, he might find at midnight a ladder against the northern tower, in which a light would be burning, and where, if he came alone, he might hear further of his suit.

Wesselényi was too good a knight to refuse the bidding of a "ladye fayre," albeit somewhat of the most hazardous. At midnight, and alone, he left his camp; and, gaining the summit of the rock, found the promised light in the northern tower. The ladder hung from an open window, and silently and cautiously did the lover gain the height: but no sooner had he sprung into the tower than he found himself suddenly seized from behind and dragged to the ground, while a body of armed men entered the chamber and bound him in chains. Blindfolded he was

led forward he knew not whither, till a harsh voice commanding a halt, thus addressed the prisoner, "Sir Knight, strategy is fair in love as well as war; you have delivered yourself into the power of your enemies, and it is for them to dispose of you as they choose; but the commandress of the castle is inclined to mercy, and on condition of your deserting the cause of the king, she is willing not only to give you freedom, but to bestow herself and her vast possessions on you by marriage. In an hour I come to receive your answer,—acceptance or death!" Rude as was the trial where love and life pleaded against loyalty and duty, the soldier withstood it manfully; and, at the hour's conclusion, returned only a sullen answer, "Better die than betray!" Scarce had the words passed his lips when the bandage fell from his eyes; Szécsi Maria stood before him in all her beauty, a smile played around her mouth, and, extending her hand to the astonished Wesselényi, she exclaimed, "Take it, noble Knight, and with it all I have, for thy constancy hath won my heart: keep but thy faith to me as well as thou hast done to thy king, and Maria will gladly acknowledge thee her conqueror."

Many are the versions of this history,—for it has been sung by Hungarian poets,* spun out by German romancers, and told by every peasant to his child, from that day to this,—but all agree that Wesselényi gained the castle and the lady at the same time; and our guide pointed out to us the northern tower by which, as he assured us, the Knight entered the castle. It was where the rock is highest and steepest; and it was no faint heart that took such a path to gain his lady love. In the summer-house is still preserved a tablet erected by Wesselényi to commemorate his victory,

After the sudden, and perhaps violent death of Wesselényi, at the moment when he was about to head the insurgent nobles against the false Leopold, Murány was seized by the Crown, contrary to all law and all right. It was afterwards dismantled, and conferred, with the great estates attached to it on the Judex Curiæ Kohári; by marriage with the last of whose descendants it has come into the possession of a member of that luckiest of marrying families, the Coburgs.

As we returned from our ramble, we were not sorry to find that the landlord had formed more favourable notions of our im-

* The most celebrated of these is the "Murányi Venus" of Gynögyösi, for which the poet was rewarded by Maria with the princely gift of a whole manor.

portance; for he not only offered us a good supper, but found us comfortable beds without further difficulty. His conduct towards us may serve as a lesson to future travellers not to attempt a journey in Hungary without all the due appliances of gentility. A good carriage, and a servant who speaks the language, are absolutely necessary: as for the Swiss fashion of travelling with a blouse and knapsack, I doubt much if the luckless bearer of such plebeian articles would not be beat out of the first village he came to. In fact, none but German Handwerksburschen or Jew peddlers are even seen in such guise; and every honest Hungarian peasant thinks it an act of patriotism to beat and rob them whenever he has an opportunity.

In most countries a respectable appearance has its advantages; but in none does it make more impression than in Hungary. I have heard it often said, that no one who travels in a certain style is ever likely to be robbed: nay, I remember Count B——, whose notions of aristocratic privilege, it must be confessed, are not of the most modest order, declaring "that the robbery of a noble was a thing unheard of in Hungary; that he did not believe a man of pure blood could be robbed." I suppose we must conclude with Falstaff, that it is all instinct:—"Beware instinct: the lion will not touch the true prince. Instinct is a great matter!" Nor, after all, is there any thing so wonderful in it: honour among rogues is a proverb all over the world, and the appropriating to themselves what belongs to mankind, is the great privilege which the aristocracy in all ages have considered the peculiar glory of their order.

Great was our delight, on returning to Rosenau, to find the sketches all safe, and once more in our possession. They had been found by a peasant on his road to market, and were readily returned, without having even been opened.

But we were doomed to new troubles. Our miner had come back, but not alone: a pretty little blue-eyed girl accompanied him, as he said, looking very sheepishly, "to help him to carry the book!" And just as we were starting, he felt suddenly so ill, that he was sure he could not hold out for a long journey. His sweetheart was evidently afraid of losing him if she let him stray so far away: and what a woman wills we knew it was no use opposing; so we even consented to give him his discharge at once. While yet hesitating as to what was to be done in this emergency, the waiter presented a little Polish boy, who spoke German, and who was on his way to Pest. The poor child was

not more than fourteen years old, and had been sent out by his father, a school-master in Gallicia, with nothing but a smattering of Latin and German, and a long Latin letter, recommending him to God and the charitable, to aid him in seeking his fortune in the world. The poor fellow was so anxious to go, that, more for the sake of pleasing him, than with any hopes of his being useful,—though, had we not been leaving the country of the Sclavacks, his Polish would have helped us considerably, as the two languages have a great similarity,—I told him to mount the box, and off we went.

Our horses' heads were now turned towards Aggtelek, a small village about twenty miles off, and remarkable for possessing one of the largest caverns in the world. Torches we had already provided, and guides were soon found to accompany us; for, unlike Demenfalva, Aggtelek is well known, and is often visited by foreigners as well as by Hungarians. It is not necessary to give a minute account of what has already been often described. The cavern is formed in a limestone rock, like all others we know of, and extends to a great distance under ground. It is said to communicate with two small caverns* which open at ten miles' distance from Aggtelek. In the vastness of its halls, the huge proportions of its columns, and the mysterious windings of its long passages, Aggtelek is superior to any thing of the kind I have seen. In some places, too, it is of exquisite beauty. While H—— was making a sketch of the *Tanz Saal* (Ball-room,) where in summer the peasants sometimes hold their fêtes, the guides conducted me to an offset from the great cavern, called the Garden of Paradise. For a full quarter of an hour we crept on our hands and knees; sometimes wading through the small brook which makes its way out by this passage, sometimes sliding back over the slimy rocks, and sometimes squeezing through narrow crevices where there was scarcely room for the human body to pass. At last we once more stood upright; we had reached the Garden, and well does it deserve the name of Paradise; for any thing more beautiful than the thousand fantastic forms—trees, fruits, waterfalls, serpents,—into which the stalactitic pillars have formed themselves, it is impossible to conceive.

As far as I can guess, we followed the great cavern for not less than two or three miles, and during the whole of our route we were presented with a constant succession of beauties, to all of

* In these caverns there is said to be ice, as at Demenfalva, though nothing of the kind is seen at Aggtelek.

which the imaginations of the peasants have appropriated names and likenesses. The guides could speak only a very few words of German, but among them were "*Deutsche Hosen;*" and they did not fail to apply them with a look of most sovereign contempt to a curious formation of the stone which imitated with sufficient accuracy a pair of knee-breeches,—in the opinion of every true Magyar, the most ridiculous and despicable covering for humanity ever invented.

When we returned, the sun had already set; but the accommodations were so very indifferent at Aggtelek, that we determined to push on a stage further that night. The Haiduk was ready with four horses; but it was easy to see they had been at work all day, and that they were little inclined for further exercise. When we got about two miles from the village, and were just on the borders of a great forest where the roads were sadly cut up, this indisposition manifested itself in a still more positive manner, for they stood quite still; nor could all the flogging, shouting, or even crying of the boy who drove us—for the poor lad cried with passion at the disgrace,—incite them to any other movement than kicking at the carriage. It was certainly a disagreeable dilemma; it was just getting dark; we knew nothing of the country, but we had heard at Vienna, that it was one of the worst parts of Hungary for robbers, and that it was not safe travelling without a guard of soldiers. Something, however, must be done; and, requesting H—— not to let the boy take away the horses, I set off to get some assistance from Aggtelek. Having at last found the only man who knew any thing of German, and having looked into every stable and ox-shed in the village, and having in consequence been attacked by some score furious dogs, from which nothing but a huge stick and a pistol saved me from suffering, I at last got four oxen, and returned again to the carriage. But here a new misfortune awaited me; the boy and the horses had somehow disappeared in the dark, and it was found impossible to apply the oxen harness to the carriage; so that, after another hour lost in disputes among the peasants,—for our happy ignorance of the language saved us from the possibility of taking part in them,—we saw them all return quietly to Aggtelek, leaving us to stick fast in the mud till next morning.

My philosophy is fortunately of that practical kind which always seeks consolation where a particle of it is to be found;

so, sending off the boy with the peasants to see if any thing eatable could be found in Aggtelek, we struck a light by the aid of flint and schwamm, as the jägers had taught us at Lomnitz, lighted our carriage-lamps, reloaded our fire-arms, placed them conveniently for use, routed out a couple of bottles of wine from some hidden part of our baggage, refilled our pipes, and indulged in the hopes of a substantial supper and a pleasant bivouac. In time the little Pole reappeared, accompanied by a stout peasant bearing two huge earthen pots filled with savoury viands, which, if not the most delicate, were just as eagerly devoured as if they had been so. The peasant made a large fire of dried wood which the neighbouring forest furnished in abundance; and, laying himself down by it, made us understand that he would spend the night there to guard us. Probably the gourd of wine which had been brought from the village, and which we had given up to him, was not without its influence on his decision. I am really sorry for the lovers of the marvellous, that I have nothing more romantic to tell them than that we ate our supper, drank our wine, smoked our pipes, laughed over the adventures of the day, and slept so soundly, that six fresh horses were already harnessed to the carriage, and a dozen fine good-tempered peasants lifting at the wheels, before we opened our eyes the next morning, and wondered what it was all about. We reached Miskolcz the same night, and were glad to luxuriate in a good bed and a clean room,—comforts we had scarcely enjoyed since we left Kaschau.

The continual clanking of the prisoners' chains which never ceased to ring in our ears so long as we tarried in Miskolcz, has left but a disagreeable impression of the place on our memories. It must require long habit before one can feel accustomed to the sight of chained prisoners performing the work at which in happier lands we have seen only free labourers employed. I have witnessed it in Germany and Italy, as well as in Hungary; but I never could pass those melancholy strings of wretched beings without a feeling of shame that man should expose these moral diseases of his species to the gaze of the whole world, instead of covering them with the veil of secrecy and carefully administering to their cure.

We obtained a servant here who could speak Hungarian, and dismissed our little Pole with money to enable him to reach Pest, and directions where to find us if he had need of assistance when

he arrived there. As we could hear nothing of him afterwards, I am inclined to hope he found some service on the way.

A dreary route over a rich but flat and boggy country, intersected by innumerable small rivers, brought us to the foot of a low range of hills, which, stretching far away to the north, terminates towards the south near the little town of Tokay on the Theiss. Every body has heard of imperial Tokay; and here we were in the very midst of the vineyards where the King of Wines has established his throne.

Tokay is a small town, insignificant in itself, except as it is connected with the trade in wine. It is inhabited by a strangely mixed population,—Jews, Armenians, and Greeks, besides various members of the indigenous population of Hungary,—and contains churches of no less than six different religions. The Bodrog and the Theiss, which unite just above the town, form as fine a river for navigation as the merchant could desire; and it is covered with large, heavy, decked boats, much like those seen on the Danube. As yet, no steam-boat has been established on the Theiss; but from the extreme richness of the productions of the surrounding country, the size and importance of many of the places on its banks, and, above all, from the exceedingly bad roads in its neighbourhood, there can be little doubt that the establishment of steam navigation will be undertaken before long. The depth, width, and the force of stream of the Theiss are as favourable as could be desired; but it is objected that the windings of the river require to be cut off by canals. In some cases thirty or forty miles would be saved by a cut of three or four. Should the canal be formed between the Danube at Pest and the Theiss at Szolnok, as is contemplated, this river will assume an importance far greater than is at present imagined. The slow muddy waters of the Theiss seem to suit the fish better than those of any other river in Hungary. It is said that, after an overflow, they have been left in such quantities as to be used for feeding the pigs and manuring the ground. The sturgeon of the Theiss, though smaller than that of the Danube, is remarkable for its fatness and delicate flavour.

We were too early to enjoy any of the festivities of the vintage at Tokay, which call all the nobility of the neighbourhood together, and are generally kept up with balls and fêtes for at least a fortnight. What the reader will perhaps think less pardonable is, that I can say nothing of the process of making the wine from personal observation; but I have heard it so often described by

persons themselves possessing vineyards,* that I can probably give more accurate information about it than if I had myself witnessed it.

The whole of the Hegyalla mountains, extending along the banks of the Bodrog twenty miles north of Tokay, produce the Tokay wine. The finest sorts, however, are grown only in Tokay, Tartzal, Zombor, Tállya, Mád, Keresztur, and some few other villages; the very finest only on a small hill, the Mézes-Mále, in the parish of Tartzal. About Tokay, and I believe along the whole chain, the hills are composed of basalt and trachytic conglomerate, covered with a deep sandy soil. The grapes are of many different kinds, of which the Formint and Champagne are considered the best. The lateness of the vintage, which is not begun here till the 26th of October, when it is finished in other parts of the country, has considerable effect on the quality of the wine.

Three kinds of wine are made at Tokay,—the *Essentz*, the *Ausbruch*, and the *Máslás*, so called from the different modes of preparing them. From the length of time the grapes hang, a great number of them lose part of their juice, begin to wither, and become exceedingly sweet. These grapes, when gathered, are placed on wooden trays, and sorted one by one with the greatest care, only the finest being selected; those which are too much withered, and those which are unripe, being alike rejected. When it is wished to obtain the Essentz, these grapes are placed in a barrel with holes at the bottom, through which all the juice that flows, without any other pressure being applied than their own weight, is allowed to pass off;—and this it is which constitutes the *Essentz*. After the Essentz is extracted, or,—as happens most frequently—when none has been taken, the grapes are at once placed in a vat and gently pressed with the hand, a small quantity of good must, or new wine, obtained in the ordinary manner, being poured over them to increase the quantity and facilitate its flow;—and the result of this process is the *Ausbruch*. To produce the *Máslás*, a large quantity of less choice must is poured over the same berries, which are now pressed as in making common wine. The Essentz can only be obtained in

* I cannot guess how the notion so common in England, that all the Tokay vineyards belong to the Emperor, has arisen. It is so far from being the case, that by far the greater part is in the hands of private individuals, and the Emperor himself is often obliged to purchase his Tokay from others.

the very best years; and, indeed it is only in favourable years that Ausbruch of a good quality is produced. The wine ought to have a fine, bright, topaz colour. The Essentz is sweet and luscious to the highest degree, and is esteemed rather as a curiosity than as pleasing to the palate; but it is the Ausbruch on which the reputation of Tokay depends. It is a sweet, rich, but not cloying wine; strong, full-bodied, but mild, bright and clear; and has a peculiar flavour of most exquisite delicacy. I have never tasted it in perfection but at private tables, and that only twice; I could then have willingly confessed it the finest wine in the world. The Máslás is a much thinner wine, rather sweet, with a preponderating flavour of the dried grape. The product of the whole Hegyalla vintage, in an ordinarily favourable season, may amount to about two hundred and fifty thousand *eimers;** of which not more than one quarter, and probably much less, is Ausbruch.

Tokay should not be drunk till it is some years old; and it is none the worse for twenty years' keeping in a good cellar. Even in Hungary I have known a ducat (ten shillings) given for a pint bottle of good old Tokay. For a fair wine, however, of three or four years old, four shillings the common bottle is a good price, and it may generally be obtained at that rate without difficulty. The expense of transport and duties comes, I think, to about two shillings the bottle more. Great care, however, should be taken in choosing a person to whom it may be safely confided. Two cases, which we intrusted to a merchant of Pest, arrived in England in a state of fermentation, with more than half the bottles broken, and the rest quite spoiled. We have every reason to believe that this arose from a portion of our wine being taken out and the bottles filled up with new wine; and, though the evidence is not sufficiently strong to justify me in publishing the name of this person, it is more than enough to make me caution any future traveller to be quite sure of his man before he ventures on giving such a commission. A society for "making known Hungarian wines" has lately been formed at Pest, and in its cellars genuine wines, supplied by the growers themselves, may be obtained; and Mr. Liedermann, a merchant and banker of Pest, who is connected with the society, will undertake to forward them.

* The *Eimer* contains about as much as sixteen ordinary wine bottles.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE PUSZTA.

The Puszta—its Extent and Formation.—Fertility.—Animals.—A Sunset on the Plains.—The Mirage.—Puszta Village.—Horse-mills.—The Puszta Shepherd—his Morality.—The Bunda.—The Shepherd's Dog.—Debreczen.—The Magyars—their Pride.—Contempt of other Nations—Idleness.—Excitability.—Dancing.—Music and Popular Poetry.—Self-respect.—Love of Country.—Hospitality.—The Hungarian Hussars.—Manufactures of Debreczen.—Reformed College.—Protestantism in Hungary.—Protestant Colleges.—College of Debreczen.—Review.—English Officers in the Austrian Service.—Water Melons.—Beggars.—The Szolga Biro of Szolnok.

As far as Tokay, our route had been ever among smiling valleys and by lovely brooks; we had passed under the shade of magnificent woods, or been cheered by the prospect of cloud-capped mountains: but the Theiss once crossed, and a scene so different opened upon us, that we could scarcely believe ourselves in the same hemisphere. Our faces were now turned towards Debreczen, and we were fairly launched on the *Puszta*—or *Steppes*, as they are called in some other counties—of Hungary.

All that surface of country, from Pest to the borders of Transylvania, and from Belgrade to the vine-bearing hills of Hegyalla, is one vast plain, occupying a space of nearly twenty-two thousand English square miles. If the geologist will cast his eyes over the map, and observe this plain, surrounded on every side by mountains, and covered with sand and alluvium—if he will then consider the Danube, and see how it spreads over the country, every day changing its course, cutting for itself new channels, and sanding up its former ones, so as sometimes to sweep away towns, and at others to leave such as were built on its banks some miles from them,*—I think he will agree with

* The Danube now rolls over the spot formerly occupied by the village of Apatin on the Lower Danube; while, on the Upper, the castle of Steyereck, which formerly overhung the river, is now a mile and a half distant from it.

me, that the whole plain has been at different periods the bed of that river and its tributaries, the Theiss and Maros.*

The soil of the Puszta, as might be anticipated from its extent, and, I might add, from the nature of the rocks from whose débris it has been formed, is various in its nature and in its powers of production. A considerable portion is a deep sand, easily worked, and yielding fair crops in wet seasons; a second, found principally in the neighbourhood of the Danube, Theiss, and Temes, is boggy, and much deteriorated in value from the frequent inundations to which it is subject, but capable of the greatest improvement at little cost; and a third is a rich black loam, the fertility of which is almost incredible. When the reader reflects that this fruitful plain is bounded on two sides by the largest river in Europe, that it is traversed from north to south by the Theiss, and that it communicates with Transylvania by the Maros, it is almost impossible to calculate what a source of wealth it might prove to the country. In any other part of the civilized world we should see it teeming with habitations, and alive with agricultural industry,—the envy of surrounding princes, the granary of Europe. Here, it is the most thinly populated, the worst cultivated, and the least accessible portion of the country. Various causes have contributed to produce this effect. Most of the inhabitants of the plains are Magyars, whose warlike propensities induced them to take the most active part in the constant wars in which the country was formerly engaged; for since Arpád first set foot in Hungary, one thousand years ago, I do not think it has ever enjoyed ten years' peace till towards the middle of the last century. This in itself must have checked the increase of population. Among the Magyars, too, the number of children is generally small:—why the Irish should be so prolific on starvation, and the Magyars so much the contrary on abundance, is, I must confess, a mystery to me; but such is the fact. The ease with which land is obtained, its cheapness, the richness of the soil, and the few wants of the people, have also operated to check the progress of improvement in agri-

* Some are of opinion that the whole plain formed one large inland sea at an earlier period of the earth's history; and it is highly probable. The limestone, similar to that of the Paris basin, which overlays the granite at Margaretha, and in many parts of the little Carpathians, appears to support this opinion. In different parts of the plain, particularly in the neighbourhood of the Theiss, fossil remains of the mammoth, elephant, and fossil deer have been discovered.

culture. The formation of roads, too, is rendered exceedingly difficult by the distance from which the necessary materials would often require to be conveyed; but still more by the unjust character of the law, which throws the whole burden of making them on the peasant, thus rendering it impossible to expend so large a capital as would be required for their first formation in such situations.

The Puszta, however, is neither entirely without inhabitants nor without cultivation. It has cities, towns, and villages; few and far between, it is true, but generally large and populous where they do occur. On the great road, or rather track, between Tokay and Debreczen, a village occurs almost every three or four hours; but in some parts, for a whole day, no such welcome sight gladdens the eye of the weary traveller. The scene, however, is not without its interest; indeed to me it presented so much that was strange, and new, and wonderful, that I felt a real delight in traversing it, and never for a moment experienced the weariness of monotony. On starting from the village where we first changed horses after quitting Tokay, fifty different tracks seemed to direct to as many different points; though, as far as the eye could detect, the end of all must be the flat horizon before us. The track which our coachman followed soon grew fainter and fainter; and, before a quarter of an hour had elapsed, we could observe no sign by which he could steer his course. The only inanimate objects which broke the uniformity of the scene were an occasional shepherd's hut, the tall beam of a well, or a small tumulus;* such as may be observed in different directions throughout the whole of the Puszta.

Of animated nature, however, there is no lack; the constant hum of insects, the screams of birds of prey, and the lowing of cattle, constantly reminded us during the day that the Puszta is no desert. Sometimes vast herds of cattle, containing many hundred head, may be observed in the distance, looking like so

* Mr. Spencer, in his "Circassia," speaks of these tumuli in Hungary, and considers them as sepulchral; I am rather inclined to believe they are boundary marks between different villages, though some of them are of a larger size than might be thought necessary for such a purpose. They are common all over Hungary, and are called *Határ*. It is possible that they may sometimes have been intended as landmarks for travellers. These must not be confounded with the *Römer Schanzen*, or Walls of the Agathyrsi,—long banks of earth traversing extensive districts, the uses of which are not well ascertained. In some parts of the plain large embankments of a recent date may be observed, intended to protect the cultivated land from the overflows of some river in the neighbourhood.

many regiments of soldiers; for, whether by accident or intention I know not, but they are commonly formed into a long loose line of three or four deep; and in this order they feed, marching slowly forwards. When the sun is pouring his hottest beams upon the plain, so that the sands seem to dance with the glowing heat, it is interesting to watch the poor sheep, and to observe the manner in which Nature teaches them to supply the place of the shady wood. The whole flock ceases from feeding, and collects into a close circle, where each places his head in the shade formed by the body of his neighbour, and thus they protect themselves from a danger which might otherwise be fatal. Herds of horses, of one or two hundred each, are no uncommon feature in the landscape.

The quantity of large falcons which scour the Puszta may account for the small number of other birds we observed. I have sometimes seen a dozen of them at a time, wheeling round and round over our heads, and screaming out their harsh cries, till every living thing tremblingly sought shelter in its most hidden retreat. Sometimes, too, a solitary heron might be detected wading about in the salt marshes with which the Puszta abounds.* Sometimes a flock of noisy plover flew up before us; but of game or small birds we saw very few.

In sandy districts the earless marmot† is a constant source of amusement. This pretty little animal, which is about the size and colour of a squirrel, is exceedingly frequent here. Never more than a few yards from its hole, it is almost impossible to get a shot at it; for the moment it is alarmed, it runs to the mouth of its burrow, where, if it observes the slightest movement on the part of the intruder, it drops down till he is out of shot, when it may again be seen running about as gay as ever. They are said to be good eating, and are often caught by the shepherds, by pouring water into their burrows.

The feeling of solitude which a vast plain impresses on the imagination, is to me more solemn than that produced by the boundless ocean, or the trackless forest: nor is this sentiment ever so strongly felt as during the short moments of twilight

* In many parts of the Puszta there are soda lakes, which dry up in summer, and leave the earth incrusted with soda, which is collected, and re-forms, every three or four days from May to October. It is reckoned that 50,000 cwts. might be collected annually if care were taken.

† I think this is the earth squirrel of some writers,—the *spermophile* of F. Cuvier.

which follow the setting of the sun. It is just as the bright orb has disappeared below the level of the horizon; while yet some red tints, like glow-worm traces, mark the pathway he has followed; just when the busy hum of insects is hushed as by a charm, and stillness fills the air; when the cold chills of night creep over the earth; when comparative darkness has suddenly followed the bright glare of day;—it is then the stranger feels how alone he is, and how awful such loneliness is where the eye sees no boundary, and the ear detects no sign of living thing.

I would not for the world have destroyed the illusion of the first sunset I witnessed on the Puszta of Hungary. The close of day found us far from any human habitation, alone in this desert of luxuriance; without a mark that man had established his dominion there, save the wheel-marks which guided us on our way, and the shepherds' wells which are sparingly scattered over the whole plain. I have seen the sun set behind the mountains of the Rhine as I lay on the tributary Neckar's banks, and the dark bold towers of Heidelberg stood gloriously out against the deep red sky;—as the ripple of the lagoons kissed the prow of the light gondola, I have seen his last rays throw their golden tints over the magnificence of fallen Venice;—I have watched the god of day as he sank to rest behind the gorgeous splendour of St. Peter's;—yet never with so strong a feeling of his majesty and power, as when alone on the Puszta of Hungary!

It was on the second morning of our journey, and as we opened our eyes after a troubled doze, that another of the most extraordinary phenomena of these plains was presented to us. We perceived what appeared to us a new country, and certainly a very different one from that which we had closed our eyes upon the previous night. A few miles before us lay an extensive lake half enveloped in a gray mist. I immediately called to the coachman to ask what lake it was I saw, as none was to be found on the map, when his loud laugh reminded me that we were in the land of the *mirage*. And sure enough it proved to be the mirage; for, as we approached, the water vanished, and the same dry plain we had known before was still present to us. On another occasion, when travelling over the plains of Wallachia, I witnessed the mirage in a still more striking manner. It was also in the morning, just as a burning sun was struggling to dissipate the thick mist so common in these climates. I could distinguish, as plainly as ever I did any thing in my life, a serpentine piece

of water with the most beautiful woods and park-like meadows, and at one end the commencement of a village. As we approached, the scene slightly changed; new points of view gradually came out, and the objects first observed vanished away. The village, which I had believed real even after I knew the landscape was mirage, was the first to disappear; the water extended itself, and the back-ground rose higher. Before long, objects began to grow less distinct, and at last the mist rose from the earth, leaving the view clear along the burning plain, while trees and water were still discernible in the air. The effect was very peculiar: I know nothing it resembled so much as some of the old Italian pictures, in which the lower part is occupied by the earth and its denizens, while the upper is gay with a brilliant throng of heavenly choristers seated on gray clouds, which are as much like the mirage as possible. I believe this phenomenon is explained as a matter of simple reflection; but, if it is so, the mirage is a mystic mirror, which shapes its images according to its own fancy, for I do not believe that in the whole of Wallachia, there could be found a real scene half so lovely as the mirage presented us with.

Such are some of the more striking pictures presented by the plains; but there are others of a more cheerful and social character. I have already said the Puszta villages are large; they sometimes contain several thousand inhabitants. Nothing can be more simple or uniform than the plan on which they are built. One long, straight, and most preposterously wide street generally forms the whole village; or it may be that this street is traversed at right angles by another equally long, straight, and wide. Smaller streets are rare; but, when they do occur, it is pretty certain they are all parallel or at right angles with each other. All the cottages are built on the same plan; a gable-end with two small windows, shaded by acacias or walnuts, faces the street. The houses are beautifully thatched with reeds, and the fences of the court-yard are often formed of the same material. The long one-storied house, roofed with wooden tiles, the best in the village,—unless the Seigneur's château happens to be there,—and behind which towers the odd half-eastern steeple, is the dwelling of the priest; and, should the traveller find himself benighted in the neighbourhood, its rich and hospitable occupant would welcome the chance which bestowed on him a guest. A little further, perhaps, stands another house, whose pretensions, if below the priest's, are above those of its neighbours. On the shutters is pasted up some official notice, and before the door

stands the stocks. It is the dwelling of the *Biro* or judge of the village. The *Hejség ház* (town-house,) the modest school-room, and the little inn, are the only other exceptions to the peasants' cottages. Besides the avenue of trees on each side, and, in wet weather, sundry pools of water, or rather small lakes, the street is often interrupted by the tall pole of a well, or the shed of a horse-mill. These horse-mills are clumsy contrivances; first, a shed is built to cover the heavy horizontal wheel in which the horse works; and then beside it is a small house containing the mill-works. Why they do not use wind-mills instead, it is difficult to say; except that the others are better understood, and require less care. Running water is so scarce on the Puszta, that water-mills are out of the question.

In the neighbourhood of the villages a certain portion of the land is cultivated,—perhaps one-tenth of the whole; and produces rich crops of *Kukurutz*, or Indian corn, wheat, hemp, flax, tobacco, and wine. The gathering in of these products occupies the scanty population without intermission from the beginning of summer to the end of autumn. Our route did not lead us through the richest part of the plains; but I do not remember ever to have seen the kukurutz looking better than here. It was just the middle of September, and every hand was occupied in the harvest. Wagon-loads of the bright yellow cones, drawn by the large white oxen, were passed at every step. And what a trial of patience it was to pass those wagons! There the peasant sits quite composedly in the front of his load, probably fast asleep, and often half drunk: until you are close to him, he will not hear you, shout as you may; and when at last he does condescend to be aware of your presence, and commences vociferating to his four oxen and plying his whip at the same time to induce them to cede the only part of the road on which your carriage can pass, the time taken by the beasts to comprehend the full force of their master's argument, and the sort of consultation they seem to hold as to whether they shall obey it or not, is sufficient to exhaust the most patient of men.

The part of the plains left for pasture is occupied during the summer months, as we have seen, by immense herds of cattle and flocks of sheep. In winter these are either brought up into the villages, or stabled in those solitary farms which form another striking peculiarity of the Puszta. Far from any beaten track or village the traveller observes a collection of buildings enclosed by a thick wall of mud or straw, with an arched gateway, and

containing a large court, surrounded by stables, barns, sheep-houses, and a shepherd's cottage or two. Here the sheep and cattle are wintered, for the sake of saving the draught of fodder; and here their guardians often remain the whole winter without exchanging a word with any other human beings than those composing their own little domestic community, for the trackless snow renders communication extremely difficult. In summer the shepherd's life is even more monotonous. He often remains out for months together, till winter comes on, and obliges him to seek shelter.

Almost all the inhabitants of the plains, except some few German colonists, are true Magyars; and nothing is so well adapted to their disposition as the half-slothful, half-adventurous life of a *Juhász,* or Puszta shepherd. His dress is the loose linen drawers, and short shirt descending scarcely below the breast, and is sometimes surmounted by the gaily embroidered waistcoat or jacket. His feet are protected by long boots or sandals; and his head by a hat of more than quaker proportions, below which hang two broad plaits of hair. The turned-up brim of the hat serves him for a drinking-cup; while the bag, which hangs from a belt round his neck, contains the bread and bacon which form his scanty meal. Over the whole is generally cast the *Bunda* or hairy cloak. I must not forget, however, that his shirt and drawers are black. Before he takes the field for the season, he carefully boils these two articles of dress in hog's lard; and, anointing his body and head with the same precious unguent, his toilette is finished for the next six months. I feel assured that the penetration of my English readers will never dive into the motive for all this careful preparation, and, that they will be little inclined to believe me if I tell them it is cleanliness! Yet so it is; for the lard effectually protects him against a host of little enemies by which he would otherwise be covered. To complete his accoutrements, he must have a short pipe stuck in his boot-top: and in his belt a tobacco-bag, with a collection of instruments,—not less incomprehensible to the uninitiated than the attendants of a Scotch mull,—intended for striking fire, clearing the pipe, stopping the tobacco, pricking the ashes, and I know not what fumatory refinements beside.

But the Bunda deserves a more special notice; for in the whole annals of tailoring no garment ever existed better adapted to its purpose, and therefore more worthy of all eulogy, than the Hungarian Bunda. It is made in the form of a close cloak without

collar, and is composed of the skins of the long-wooled Hungarian sheep, which undergo some slight process of cleaning, but by no means sufficient to prevent them retaining an odour not of the most aromatic kind. The wool is left perfectly in its natural state. The leather side is often very prettily ornamented: the seams are sewed with various-coloured leather cords, bouquets of flowers are worked in silk on the sides and borders, and a black lamb's-skin from Transylvania adorns the upper part of the back in the form of a cape. To the Puszta shepherd the Bunda is his house, his bed, his all. Rarely in the hottest day of summer, or the coldest of winter, does he forsake his woolly friend. He needs no change of dress; a turn of his Bunda renders him insensible to either extreme. Should the sun annoy him as he is lazily watching his dogs hunting the field-mice, or the earless marmots, to supply their hungry stomachs,—for, like their masters, they trust chiefly to their own talents for their support,—he turns the wool outside, and either from philosophy or experience, knows how safely it protects him from the heat. Should early snow on the Carpathians send him chilling blasts before the pastures are eaten bare, and before he can return to his village, he a second time turns the Bunda, but now with the wool inside, and again trusts to the non-conducting power of its shaggy coat. The *Guba*, woven of coarse wool, presenting much the same appearance, is a cheap but poor imitation of the Bunda.

But the heart of that man is even more curious than his outward coverture. He has a system of morality peculiar to himself. I know not why, but nomadic habits seem to confuse ideas of property most strangely in the heads of those accustomed to them: nomadic nations are always thieves; and the *Magyar Juhász*, more than half nomadic, is certainly more than half a rogue. Not that he would break into a house, or that you or I, gentle reader, need have the least fear in his society: but there are certain persons and things which he considers fair game, whenever he can meet with them.

I remember a friend regretting that he could not show us his head-shepherd, who, he said, was a remarkably fine fellow, and well worthy of being sketched as a model of his class.

"When will poor János return?" inquired the Count of his steward; "I should like the Englishmen to see him."

"In about six months," was the reply.

I asked the cause of this long absence.

"Why I believe he robbed and beat a Jew, and they have adjudged him twelve months' imprisonment for it."

"Of course you will not receive such a man into your service again?"

"——— *teremtette!* Why not?" rejoined the Count. "He was the best shepherd I had, and esteemed quite a Solomon among his fellows for the wisdom and justice with which he settled their disputes. He was the shepherds' arbitrator for miles round. As for Jews and German Handwerksburschen, János always regarded them as *feræ naturæ*, to be robbed and beaten by every honest Magyar whenever he could meet with them. He protested that had he killed the Jew, the punishment had been too severe; for there was not a pretty girl in the whole country round but had borne him a child, any one of whom was worth a dozen Jews!"

In fact, robbery is a part of the shepherd's duty; and according to his dexterity in preventing others from robbing him, or in robbing others in return when robbed, is he valued by his master and respected by his companions. He leaves the farm-house with a certain number of sheep; these he must bring back, or be punished; if any are stolen, retaliation is the only remedy; and should it not happen to fall on the right head,—Justice is blind, —more is the pity. If he robs for his master, it is but natural he should sometimes do so for himself. To supply his larder with somewhat better fare than his maize and a scanty portion of bacon affords, a straggler from a neighbour's flock is no unwelcome addition.

It would be unjust to quit the subject of the Puszta shepherd without making due and honourable mention of his constant companion and friend, the *Juhász-kutya,*—the Hungarian shepherd-dog. The shepherd-dog is commonly white, sometimes inclining to a reddish-brown, and about the size of our Newfoundland dogs. His sharp nose, short erect ears, shaggy coat, and bushy tail, give him much the appearance of a wolf; indeed, so great is the resemblance, that I have known an Hungarian gentleman mistake a wolf for one of his own dogs. Except to their masters, they are so savage that it is unsafe for a stranger to enter the court-yard of an Hungarian cottage without arms. I speak from experience; for as I was walking through the yard of a post-house, where some of these dogs were lying about apparently asleep, one of them crept after me, and inflicted a severe wound in my leg, of which I still bear the marks. Before I could turn round, the dog was already far off; for, like the wolf, they bite by snapping, but never hang to the object, like the bull-dog or

mastiff. Their sagacity in driving and guarding sheep and cattle, and their courage in protecting them from wolves or robbers, are highly praised; and the shepherd is so well aware of the value of a good one, that it is difficult to induce him to part with it.

It was not till towards the close of the second day that we arrived at Debreczen; for some rain had fallen, and we could only advance at a foot pace. Debreczen, the capital of the plains, contains a population of fifty thousand inhabitants. It well deserves the name of "the largest village in Europe," given it by some traveller; for its wide, unpaved streets, its one-storied houses, and the absence of all roads in its neighbourhood, render it very unlike what a European associates with the name of town. In rainy weather the whole street becomes one liquid mass of mud, so that officers quartered on one side the street are obliged to mount their horses and ride across to dinner on the other. Instead of a causeway, they have adopted the expedient of a single wooden plank; and it is a great amusement of the people, whenever they meet the soldiers (Polish lancers, whom they hate,) on this narrow path, to push them off into the sea of mire below.

It is in Debreczen and its neighbourhood that the true Magyar character may be most advantageously studied. The language is here spoken in its greatest purity, the costume is worn by rich as well as poor, and those national peculiarities which a people always lose by much admixture with others are still prominent at Debreczen.

The pride of the Magyar, which is one of his strongest traits, leads him to look down on every other nation by which he is surrounded with sovereign contempt. All foreigners are either *Schwab* (German,) or *Talyán* (Italian;) and it is difficult to imagine the supercilious air with which the Magyar peasant pronounces those two words. As for his more immediate neighbours, it is worse still: for the most miserable *Paraszt-ember* (poorman, peasant) of Debreczen would scorn alliance or intercourse with the richest Wallack in the country. I remember the Baroness W—— telling me that, as she was going to Debreczen some years ago with vorspann, she was accompanied by her footman, who happened to be a Wallack, and, in speaking to her, he was overheard by the Magyar coachman using that language. The peasant made no observation at the time, but, as they approached the town, he pulled up, and desired the footman to get down; assuring the lady at the same time that he meant no disrespect

to her, but that it was quite impossible that he, a Magyar, should endure the disgrace of driving a Wallack into Debreczen. Entreaties and threats were alike vain; the peasant declared he would take out his horses if the footman did not get down,—which accordingly he did. The Germans are scarcely better treated: it was only the other day, when Count M——, an Austrian officer of high rank, was calling on Madame R——, that her little son happening to let fall some plaything he had in his hand, the Count applied his glass to his eye, and politely offered to find it for him. The child, however, though it could hardly speak, had already learned to hate; and in its sparing vocabulary it found the words "*blinder Schwab!*" which it launched forth, with all the bitterness it could muster, in answer to the polite offer of the astonished Count.

The Magyar is accused of being lazy, and if by that is meant that he has not the Englishman's love of work for its own sake, I believe the charge is merited. A Magyar never moves when he can sit still, and never walks when he can ride. Even riding on horseback seems too much trouble for him, for he generally puts four horses into his little wagon, and in that state makes his excursions to the next village or to the market town. This want of energy is attended, too, with a want of perseverance. The Hungarian is easily disappointed and discouraged if an enterprise does not succeed at the first attempt.

The Magyar character has a singular mixture of habitual passiveness and melancholy, mixed up with great susceptibility to excitement. The Magyar's step is slow and measured, his countenance pensive, and his address imposing and dignified, yet, once excited, he rushes forward with a precipitation of which his enemies have often felt the force. In success he gives himself up to the most unmeasured rejoicings, and his solemnity is looked for in vain when the hot winds lend warmth to his eloquence, or the giddy dance whirls him round in its mystic maze.

It is wonderful how completely he has imparted his own character to his national music. Nothing can be more sad and plaintive than the commencement of many of the Hungarian airs. One of the most strongly characteristic of these is the Rákótzy, a march of the times of the revolutions of the Rákótzys, whose name it bears. As often happens with a revolutionary air, it has now become the national air of the country; and great is the honour of the gipsy fiddler who can play the Rákótzy with the true spirit. I could never help fancying it the wailing over

some recent defeat, mixed with reproaches to the listless or cowardly for their want of patriotism. When the quick movement comes too, it seems as if the warrior bard had changed his tone to one of encouragement, as if he would lead on his audience to enthusiasm, and from enthusiasm, to rapid energetic action, perhaps to wild excess. I give the lines as they have been sent to me, but I fear sadly that, in the hands of more civilized musicians, they will want much of that wildness and force which imparts to them such a charm as they burst from the gipsy band.

Though scarcely ever musicians themselves, and though, as an art, music is at a very low ebb in the country, yet the Magyars are said to be exceedingly susceptible to its influence. The sister art of poetry is, and always has been, much cultivated and esteemed. The dance, of which we have already spoken, when practised by the peasantry, is commonly accompanied by the recitation of verses, often composed for the occasion, and adapted to some simple national melody. Mr. Brasai, of Klausenburg, has kindly furnished me with several of these airs, as taken down from the peasants themselves; and I think they are sufficiently characteristic to be given here. I have added a very literal translation of the words; partly because I should make but an indifferent versifier, and partly because I think in this form they are most certain to retain their original characteristics.

I do not claim any great poetical merit for the words; but I think it so great an advantage to allow a people to speak for themselves, and to tell us their own feelings and thoughts in their own way, that I have overlooked the rudeness, and at times coarseness, of the compositions themselves. In the original the number and quantity of the syllables are, for the most part, as exactly maintained throughout as in Latin hexameters and pentameters. The rhyme too is well preserved, and, when read by an Hungarian, the verses are exceedingly harmonious. From the difference in the sounds of the letters from those used among us, it will be impossible for the English reader to make any thing out of the original.

The first is evidently a dialogue between two lovers; and it gives no bad idea of the part the woman is expected to play in the domestic economy of the Hungarian peasants, and of what those qualities are which she herself considers the most attractive.

The lover speaks:

I.

I should like in the plough,
Six oxen to drive,
If my dove would come,
To hold the plough.

II.

I should like in a sledge
Four horses to drive,
If my rose would come,
To hold up the sledge.

His mistress answers:

III.

Though on Saturday I soak it,
And on Sunday I wash it,
Yet to my dove
I'll give a clean shirt.

IV.

Of flour I begged the loan,
Butter for money I bought,
Yet for my dove
A cake did I bake.

V.

The lover.

I love you, my dove,
As well as new bread;
I sigh for you
A hundred thousand times a day.

VI.

The mistress.

I love you, I love you;
But tell it to none,
Till on the church stones
We are sworn to be one.

VII.

The lover.

Why should I love
If I hoped not to marry you,
If we could not meet there
Where I so much desire?

In the two next, the air of rakish carelessness after disappointment, is very characteristic of the Magyar. He is too proud to

show his feeling, and would fain laugh at care to hide his real sorrow.

One grain of wheat, two grains of rye,
I have poured them in, they are grinding now,
I have poured them in, they are grinding now.
If I should last till next year,
Taraj didum daj,
I will sow barley, I will sow oats,
Taraj didum daj;
And we two together will reap them, love,
Taraj didum daj.

II.

One grain of wheat, two grains of rye,
I have poured them in, they are grinding now,
I have poured them in, they are grinding now.
We will bake bread of it,
Taraj didum daj,
And eat till we're full, my rose,
Taraj didum daj.
Now very soon, very soon,
Taraj didum daj,
Very soon, I can kiss you now!
Taraj didum daj.

III.

One grain of wheat, two grains of rye,
I have poured them in, they are grinding now,
I have poured them in, they are grinding now.
If I should last till next year,
Taraj, taraj, daj,
Till next year if I should last,
Taraj, taraj daj,
My pretty sweetheart I will woo!
Taraj, taraj, daj.
If she refuse me, what care I?
Taraj, taraj, daj.
I'm no great loser even then,
Taraj, taraj, daj.

I.

Now that the red plum of Besztercze ripens,
In a fortnight more dear Baba will be mine.
The gooseberry ripens,
Sweeter is the fair;
Ripens the crab,
Livelier is the brown.

II.

As I went across a certain neighbour's yard,
I happened to look in at the window;
There I saw my sweetheart,—
I caught her in another's arms.
May G— scourge her!
Oh! how I do hate her!

III.

And yet she says that she my true love is,
Though all the while she is deceiving me;
But I believe not in her words.
Let her stay for ever single;
Bad in soul and body
Are both the fair and brown!

The next is a very popular song, and contains an allusion to the "Mill which grinds sorrow," as well as to several other popular proverbs and superstitions, some of which I think are common in England. It will be observed that in this, as in most other of these songs, there is rarely much connexion between the different verses.

I.

Little Komárom, great Komárom!
What pretty lasses are these three!
How I love one of them—
The prettiest of all the three!
Little Komárom, great Komárom!

II.

Little Komárom, great Komárom!
Near Görgöny there murmurs a mill,
Which, as I hear, doth sorrow grind:
I indeed have a sad sorrow,
There I'll take and grind it up,
Little Komárom, great Komárom!

III.

Little Komárom, great Komárom!
He who does not greet the Jew,
Is sure to trip across the threshold;
See, comrade, from not having greeted,
Over the threshold thou hast fallen,
Little Komárom, great Komárom!

IV.

Little Komárom, great Komárom!
No bird is prettier than the swallow,

None than the white-footed young wife,
It bites her white foot
The cold water, she cannot bear it,
Little Komárom, great Komárom!

V.

Little Komárom, great Komárom!
He who sorrow brought in fashion,
Surely that man God has cursed;
But as for this G—d d—mn'd sorrow,
It's a fashion I won't follow,
Little Komárom, great Komárom!

VI.

Little Komárom, great Komárom!
In rotten wood the worm doth grow;
For an old woman is sorrow fit:
But I of such things never think;
Like the grasshopper I hop and skip,
Little Komárom, great Komárom!

VII.

Little Komárom, great Komárom!
My little lass, how much thou 'rt grown!
What a pity thou art not married!
I would have married, but no one woo'd,
And so I was left forgotten at home,
Little Komárom, great Komárom!

I.

Oh, how dirty is your kerchief!
Perhaps you have no sweetheart?
Give it me, and I will wash it,
For nobody loves me.

II.

The wind whistles, and the tree cracks;
Under it sits a shepherd boy:
Down to the knee his Guba is fringed;
A sad song sounds his pipe.

III.

Off I went into the vineyard:
A hoe I took in my hand,
But I hung it on a tree:
I drank wine under the shade.

IV.

My glossy locks my shoulders beat,
They have soil'd my fine linen shirt;

Wash it, my rose, and make it clean,
For near thy garden flows the Theiss.

The words of the following are so characteristic of the pride and independence of the wealthy Magyar peasant, that I give them entire.

I.

Of six herdsmen I'm the master;
I'm accosted as "wealthy sir:"
Herds of cattle fill my pastures;
Six watch-dogs keep guard for me.

II.

When my food in the pot is ready,
My six servants sit round with me;
And we eat our fill of the heap of *kása*,
As well as the Count with his thirty dishes.

III.

A hundred-florin bay I ride for a hackney;
He prances so, that his feet strike fire;
Like me he is true Magyar bred;
On him I can catch the hare with my whip.

IV.

But they say that I've neither table nor chair:
Ferdinand has not so many as I!
I sit where I list on all Balaton's shores,
And I eat and I drink wherever I please.*

Few people have more legends in song than the Magyars; and I have heard that it is a common custom for the young girls of a village to collect in circles round the winter's fire, with their spindles in their hands, and in turns sing the legendary history of their native land, as they have learnt it from their mothers. Great is the honour paid on these occasions to the best story-teller of the party; and it is not uncommon for the young men, who are privileged to hover round that poetic circle, and even to obtain a kiss for every time they can pick up the purposely dropped spindle, to choose their wives according to their excellence in the bardic art.

The Magyar peasant has a strong feeling of self-respect, at

* A great number of "Hungarian popular songs," have been translated and published by Dr. Bowring in his "Poetry of the Magyars," 1830.

times bordering perhaps on foolish pride. It is very rarely he will consent to exhibit himself as an actor, and in consequence the country is filled with German players, Bohemian riders, and gipsy musicians; for, however much he may dislike amusing others, he has not the least objection that others should amuse him. To all this is united a sense of personal decency, and a fastidious delicacy in certain matters, scarcely to be found amongst any other people.

The Magyar has a passionate love of country, united to a conviction that no one is so happy and prosperous as himself. The Swiss does not feel a more devoted attachment to his mountains than the Magyar to his plains. Csaplovics tells us that a young girl of Debreczen, who was taken for the first time into the mountains of Liptau and Arva, regarded the villages with the utmost astonishment; and, on seeing what to her eyes appeared the barrenness and poverty of the scenery, burst out in exclamation, "What! do men live here too?"

The "truth in wine" has long been proverbial, and it is nowhere better exemplified than in the Magyar. No sooner does the fear of ridicule forsake him than he is seized with an irresistible desire to weep over the miseries of his father-land. With high and low, the reign of Corvinus, when Hungary was respected abroad and the peasant protected at home, is the imaginary golden age to which they all refer. Not a mother wails more bitterly over her lost child than the wine-softened Magyar over the fallen glories of the Hunia.

The language and the religion are two important points of nationality with the Magyar. He believes that he alone has the true faith—Calvinistic—which he knows only by the name of *Magyars vallás;* and that his is the only language understood in heaven, and therefore the only one to be used in prayer. A poor peasant nurse—they are said to be the best nurses in the world—sitting by the bedside of the Countess D——, heard her utter in the excess of pain the common German exclamation, "*Ach Gott! ach Gott!*"—"Ah, my lady," observed the poor Magyar, "God forgive me! but how can you expect God to listen to you, and give you ease, if you speak a language he does not understand?"

Hospitality is a virtue of the Magyar, as well as of every other inhabitant of Hungary; and, though it is the fashion to consider it rather a necessity of uncivilized life than a quality of polished society, it is nevertheless the parent of a thousand kindly

feelings both in the host and guest, which leave their impress in the general character, and which are but ill replaced by the cold egotistical formalities substituted for it in the intercourse of what is called, *par excellence*, the world.

In the upper classes the personal pride of the Hungarian character is apt to create jealousies against any one whose superior talent may have placed him above his fellows in public esteem; and there are few countries in which a great man makes more personal enemies, and has to combat more petty annoyances, than in Hungary.

It is scarcely necessary to say, that, with such dispositions, the Magyar is strongly inclined to conservatism; he hates new-fangled notions and foreign fashions; he always considers it a sufficient condemnation to say, "Not even my grandfather ever heard of such a thing!"

As soldiers, the Hungarians have the reputation of making the best light troops in Europe. The hussar is a smart active fellow, a little vain of his own appearance, and passionately fond of his horse, for whose accommodation he never hesitates to steal, if he thinks he can do it without detection:—he would not be a good hussar unless he did. He bears punishment gaily, and both he and his steed will manage to live where many other troops would starve.

Debreczen is celebrated in Hungary as well for its great fairs as for its manufactures, which, if rude, are adapted to the wants of the people. This is the great mart for the produce of the north and east of Hungary,—cattle, horses, bacon, tobacco, wine, wax, honey, flax, &c.; and a great part of the small traders of Transylvania supply themselves from hence with colonial produce, and the showy fineries of Vienna. No less than twenty-five thousand of the Bundas I have so much eulogized are prepared here every year, and expedited to every part of the country. The true Hungarian pipe too is another produce of Debreczen; and a curious affair it is, with its short stick and long thin bowl. There is also a large manufactory of soap here, in which the soda collected in the neighbouring dry lakes is chiefly used.

At one end of the over-wide chief street—full twice as wide as any street in London—and contrasting ill with the one-storied houses which stand on either side, towers the Reformed Church and College of Debreczen; for Debreczen is not only the capital of Magyarism, but the capital of Calvinism also in Hungary. The

Protestants of Hungary are divided into two classes: the Lutherans, who adhere to the Confession of Augsburg; and the Reformed, who follow the doctrines of Calvin. The former are principally found in the north and east of Hungary, and include many Germans and Sclavacks; the latter are almost entirely Magyars, and chiefly inhabit the towns and villages of the Puszta.

I have often had occasion to notice the civil wars which occupy so prominent a place in Hungarian history; and, as might be expected, no sooner did the Reformed doctrines gain a footing than—whether from sincere belief, or only from a political calculation of the chiefs I know not,—religious differences entered largely into the causes of dispute. At one time England and Holland supported the Protestant insurgents in Hungary: now they were at the very gates of Vienna itself, and religious liberty seemed on the point of being firmly established; and now, delivered over to the persecutions of their bitterest enemies, the whole party seemed on the point of utter annihilation. In the reign of Leopold the First, nothing that falsehood and treachery could effect for their destruction was left untried; and in spite of the treaties of Vienna, (1606,) and of Linz, (1647,) in which their liberties had been solemnly guarantied, it was not till Maria Theresa, in her hour of need, had experienced good proofs of their loyalty, that their existence was fairly acknowledged, and the right of private worship, though still under many degrading restrictions, accorded. In the reign of Joseph they obtained still farther concessions, and were placed nearly on an equality with the Catholics. They were now allowed to build churches, establish and endow schools, were absolved from Catholic oaths and attendance on Catholic places of worship; and the male children in mixed marriages, if the father was Protestant, were to be educated in that faith. These, and some other privileges, were confirmed by Leopold the Second, and are enjoyed by the Hungarians at the present day. They still, however, complain of grievances—particularly of the six weeks' *instruction* which converts from Catholicism to Protestantism are obliged to undergo, and which exposes them to great annoyances—indeed, they claim perfect equality as their right, and without it they will never be satisfied.

The Protestants of the Reformed faith have the best institutions for education of any of the established religions in Hungary. The chief of these is the College of Debreczen, which was founded in 1792, and contains a library of twenty thousand

volumes. I subjoin some remarks on these schools from Csaplovics,* in which the reader may perhaps perceive the origin of some curious scholastic customs, of which the traces remain in our universities at the present day. "Besides the elementary school, (*Trivialschulen,*) of which there is one in every parish, the Reformed have many well-managed grammar-schools, (*Gymnasien,*) and three great institutions called Colleges, viz. at Debreczen, Sáros Patak, and Pápa. The members of these colleges are divided into two classes, the greater and lesser students; and the greater again into *Togati*, and *non-Togati*.

"Those called Togati are such as intend to dedicate themselves to the church or to teaching. They have a peculiar black gown, *Toga;* and a black belt, something like that of the Catholic priests, which they put on to attend church and lectures. The Togati have their lodgings in the college free, about six shillings allowed for candles during the year, and from one to two *metzen*† of wheat for bread. Every one has his meals cooked where he likes, which are afterwards brought to his cell by the fags (*dienstbaren Schulknaben.*) Each pays for his own firing. The greatest privilege of the Togati is the right to receive a regular diploma from the college, called a *Patens*, and duly signed by the rector, empowering them to visit the Reformed parishes far and near on all the great feasts,—as Christmas, Easter, and Whitsuntide,—where they preach a sermon, and receive a present in money in return, generally from one pound to five. On these occasions a strong *Mendicans*—a student of an inferior class (our sizar)—carries after the *Deák Ur*, (Mr. Latin,) who marches as *Legatus* before, a mighty bag, which he rarely brings home empty. This is called *legátióba járni* (to go on an embassy.)"

As might be expected, the villages containing the mansions of rich Protestant nobles are the most frequented. One old lady used to receive twelve of these Togati every feast; and, after entertaining them hospitably, sent each away with a present of one hundred florins (4*l.*) in money, and a bag filled with hams, sausages, corn, and other provisions for the quarter.

Csaplovics continues: "The twelve first of the Togati are called *Primarii*, or *Jurati*. Their duty is to observe the conduct of the rest of the students, to see that they keep the college

* Gemälde von Ungarn, vol. i.

† The metzen is about one bushel and three quarters Winchester measure.

laws, and to point out any irregularities they may discover. In order to have a more strict watch over the students, they have the right to visit the rooms during the night; on which account no student's door can be locked. Into this college police only those are admitted who have been from six to nine years Togati, who have finished their studies with credit, and who have distinguished themselves by their good conduct. They are subjected, previously to admission among the Primarii, to the strictest examination, and then take an oath in public to fulfil their duties conscientiously."

The first Primarius is called *Senior*, and acts as steward of the college, for which he receives 40*l*. a year; the second is called *Contrascriba*, and is the attorney-general of the community; while the rest act as private tutors to the other students, with a salary of 3*l*. and three *metzen* of corn.

"To the class of the non-Togati belong all those who intend to devote themselves to politics—or any thing else or nothing else—and are called *Publikusok* (*Publici*.) The course of study for this class extends only to four years."

"The lesser students form nine classes, the lowest of which are supplied with teachers chosen from among the Togati.

"The fee for instruction—*Didactrum*—is according to the wealth of the student: the poorest pay 6*s*. yearly; those in more easy circumstances, 12*s*.; and the richest, 18*s*. The Togati, who act as private lecturers and tutors, receive from the students, according to their circumstances, from one ducat to many for their instructions; and it is from this source chiefly that the industrious Togati derive their incomes. The number of the Togati and other students, following the higher branches of science, amounted in 1818, in Debreczen, to five hundred and twenty;* in Sàros Patak, of Togati alone, to three hundred and sixty-three; and in Pápa to one hundred and ten: of greater and lesser students in Sàros Patak, the total number was fourteen hundred and twenty."

Though the students of Debreczen have the reputation of being rather rough in manner and unpolished in appearance, they are generally stanch Protestants, with a strong love of liberty and a stern adherence to the constitution of their fathers. From the prevalence of the Magyar language in this part of Hungary, they have a decided advantage in public speaking over those edu-

* The whole number at Debreczen is upwards of two thousand.

cated out of the country, or even in those places where German is the fashionable medium of conversation. I believe they have the reputation of being good Latinists; which, in Hungary, means rather good speakers and writers of Latin, than good readers and critics of the Latin authors.

It happened, while we were at Debreczen, that the regiment quartered in the neighbourhood was united at that place for the annual manœuvres and inspection; and, as we were walking about the town, we were not a little surprised to recognise under the lancer's jacket and cap an English face,—Captain B——, whom we had known elsewhere. So unexpected a meeting was pleasant enough for both parties; and we were happy to avail ourselves of an offer from the colonel, whom we met at supper, to join the review next morning. In all the world no better place for a review can be found than the Debreczeni Puszta, as this part of the plain is called. The regiment was composed entirely of Poles from Gallicia; a very rough-looking set, whom we were told it is almost impossible to keep clean and honest. The officers complain much of their drunkenness, dishonesty, and turbulence in quarters. In rank, however, they looked exceedingly well, and their horses still better. They were chiefly mounted from Wallachia, Moldavia, and Transylvania: one hundred guldens *c. m.* or 10*l.* being about the medium price of each horse for the remounts. It is said to be wonderful how much these horses will support with the poor nourishment they get. Their condition was excellent. The most interesting manœuvres to us were the false charge, the scattered retreat, and the re-forming of the regiment in order. The whole regiment, fourteen hundred strong, started at full gallop, and in that manner came forward to within a few yards of where we were standing with the colonel; when, on the word being given, the whole dispersed in the greatest seeming disorder, retreated to the point from which they had advanced, and re-formed themselves in line in an astonishingly short space of time. The Polish lancers are acknowledged to be excellent horsemen; there was not a man in this regiment who could not pick up his lance from the ground when his horse was at full gallop.

The number of English officers in the Austrian cavalry is not less, I believe, than two hundred—more, probably, than in all the other foreign armies of Europe. It is difficult to find sufficient motives for this preference, unless it be accounted for by the kind manner in which their brother officers receive them, and

by the cheapness of provisions in most parts of the Austrian empire. The Government, too, is said to regard Englishmen generally rather with an eye of favour. Yet the pay is miserably small, promotion very slow, duty severe, and the quarters often most wretched. I can scarcely conceive a situation offering fewer temptations than that of an officer quartered in some village of the plains of Hungary, where he is obliged to put up with half a room in a peasant's cottage, where he is without books or the possibility of getting them, without a soul who can speak a word of any language he understands to converse with, and with no chance of companionship, except by riding twenty or thirty miles to the next detachment. The only advantages I know are, that tobacco and wine are cheap and good, and the officer may hunt, fish, or shoot, wherever and whenever he pleases.

On leaving Debreczen, we turned towards Pest;—a long journey, occupying, at this season of the year, when the horses are generally engaged with the harvest, not less than two days and nights. We were frequently obliged to remain three, four, or five hours waiting for horses before the Biro could be awakened, and the Kis Biro sent to the pastures, horses be caught, brought up to the village, fed, and harnessed to the carriage. It is tedious work, though it is not altogether without its advantages. One morning as we were dozing over this wearisome interval, and just as the sun began to show his pleasant face at the far end of the village, we were roused by a clattering of hoofs, tinkling of bells, neighing of horses, and lowing of cattle, as though a four-footed army were about to take the village by storm. A troop of several hundred horses, and almost as strong a horned corps headed by the parish bull as drum-major, soon came galloping by, and then filed off each to his respective quarters, as regularly as so many soldiers to their billets. They had been grazing all the night in the rich Puszta pastures, and were now driven up for the work of the day. Scarcely were the stable-doors fairly opened for the horses and cattle, than the pigs and geese rushed out, and, grunting and cackling their satisfaction, they started off to the well-known rendezvous, where their leaders would be ready to show them the best stubble in the parish. We were so much amused with this busy scene, that we did not observe how much we had profited by it till reminded that four fresh horses were already harnessed to the carriage, and ready to start.

We were now in the country of water-melons, and just in the season. Although this delicious fruit keeps but a very short time, and can only be eaten fresh, it is an important article of cultivation here. In addition to the number consumed by the men, children, and pigs,—for the latter often come in for their share before all is over, a great number is sent by the Theiss and Danube to Pest, Presburg, and Vienna. At Pest, the September fair is called the *Melonen Markt*, from the quantity of this fruit brought up the river at that time. A fine water-melon, of the size of a man's head, costs about two pence English money on the plains. It is difficult to convey a notion of the luxury of this fruit in a hot climate, and especially in travelling over dusty roads. Some Hungarian writer considers it a special gift of Providence to the Puszta, to compensate for the bad water found there. The common melons are fine here, and even cheaper than the water-melons.

The wine of the plains is not, to my taste, to be compared to that of other parts of Hungary. It is strong, but it is deficient in that flavour which the mountain lends its grapes. The tobacco of the plains is also strong, but considered deficient in aroma.

Among the crops most common here, and most strange to the Englishman's eye, are those of sun-flowers and pumpkins; the first cultivated for the oil they yield, the second used for fattening the pigs.

As we arrived towards evening on the outskirts of the straggling town of Szolnok, we found the bridge which we had to cross incumbered with a crowd of aged and maimed before each of whom was a large heap of kukurutz. I have already said it was the time of harvest; and, as we slowly followed the train of heavily-laden wagons, we observed that every peasant, as he passed a beggar, threw a yellow cone of kukurutz to this heap, and received a poor man's blessing in return. With the characteristic cunning of their class, they knew that when the hand is most full the heart is most open; and, by thus exhibiting their own destitution in glaring contrast with the plenty of their neighbours, they managed, without the trouble of sowing or gathering, to reap a sufficient harvest to maintain them for the winter.

The mention of Szolnok reminds me of one of the many instances of politeness we received from persons to whom we were totally unknown. As we stopped at the town-house, and sent in our assignation for fresh horses, the Szolga-biro came out,

and, raising his little cap, assured us horses should be procured as soon as possible. He was a good-tempered-looking man, and was evidently so anxious for a chat with the strangers that we did not like to disappoint him. He knew from our assignation that we were Englishmen; and no sooner did he learn from our conversation that we had taken the trouble to examine the riches and beauties of his native land, and found much to admire and respect, both in the country and its institutions, than he scarce knew how to express his joy. Never was there a people more grateful for sympathy than the Hungarians. He would not allow us to leave the town till he had filled the carriage with the choicest peaches, melons, and plums, from his own garden: not to mention a large loaf of Szolnok bread, which he pronounced, and I believe he was right too, to be the very best in Hungary. It is true, all this might be nothing but the effect of good-nature: and yet, reader, had you seen the real kindness with which it was done, the interest the good man took in our journey, the sentiments he expressed in favour of our native land; had you received all this attention from an individual you never saw before, and whom in all human probability you would never see again; and had you felt that it was to your country rather than to yourself you owed it,—you must be differently constructed from me if you did not find yourself a happier man than when you entered Szolnok.

But it is high time to finish this chapter, for it was my intention to confine myself to the peculiarities of the Puszta, and I am wandering from it;—kindness to the stranger is common to every part of Hungary.

CHAPTER XVIII.

MUNICIPALITIES AND TAXATION.

County Meeting at Pest.—Origin of Hungarian Municipalities.—The Municipal Government of Counties.—Municipal Officers.—Fö Ispán.—Vice-Ispán.—Szolga-biro.—Payment and Election of Magistrates.—County Meetings—their Powers.—Restaurations.—Municipal Government of Towns.—Senatus and Kózség.—Abuse of Candidation.—Municipal Government of Villages.—Advantages of Decentralization.—The Biro.—Taxation.—Mode of Levying Taxes.—Amount of Revenue.—Errors of the System.

On our return to Pest, all the world was talking of a great county meeting which had just taken place; in which the member, Mr. Précsi, had been recalled by his constituents, and dismissed from his place for voting contrary to their instructions. The greatest efforts had been made by the Government party, at the head of which was the Fö Ispán, to defeat the Liberals; and, finding themselves in a minority, they proposed to adjourn the new election to another day: but, just at the critical moment, Count Károlyi György sprung upon the table, and calling out, "No time like the present!" was received with such a burst of acclamation as at once decided the question, and obliged the Tories to give up any further contest. The new Liberal deputy, Mr. Fáy, was required, before receiving his authority, to swear in no way, "by speech or silence," to act contrary to the instructions of those who elected him; and it was determined that henceforward every deputy from that county should take the same oath.

There is something so decidedly free, and even democratic, in these county meetings, and in the municipal* institutions of Hungary generally, that they excited my interest in no ordinary degree; and I think I cannot do better than dedicate a few pages to their consideration before we proceed further on our journey. The county meeting at Pest was, it is true, rather political than municipal in its character; but, though, in this instance, the two institutions were mixed together, they are generally sufficiently separated to entitle us to consider them apart.

*"By the term 'municipal,' I mean to designate the administration which the inhabitants of any village, burg, or section of the country, established for the management of their local affairs, as distinguished from and independent of the political government."—*Urquhart's Turkey*, p. 71.

I am inclined to think the Hungarians owe their municipal institutions to the Sclaves whom they conquered; not merely because the latter were a settled nation skilled in agriculture and other arts of civilized life, and therefore necessarily exercising a strong influence over a nomadic people like the Magyars, but because we find some traces of similar institutions among other Sclavish nations long before they were known to the European nations of Gothic origin. The popular character of the institutions of Poland are well known, and in the early history of Russia the same tendency to popular government may be traced. Segur, particularly, remarks on the firmness with which the Russian people maintained the management of their local affairs in their own hands; nor was it without the greatest difficulty that the descendants of Ruric destroyed the ancient customs, and finally subjected Russia to the yoke of feudality. Several of the titles too of the municipal officers in Hungary are derived from the Sclavish language, and it is therefore more than probable that the offices themselves had their origin from the Sclaves.

Be this as it may, when St. Stephen,—the Alfred of Hungary,—about the year 1000, undertook to settle the affairs of his new kingdom, he at once destroyed the octarchy, or rule of the descendants of the eight chieftains who conquered the land; and in part redividing, and in part adopting former divisions, he constituted the counties nearly in their present number and form, whilst for the government of these counties he appointed officers similar to those now existing.

In Hungary, each of the fifty-two counties (*Vármegye*) has a separate local administration, and constitutes a kind of state within itself; nor can the general Government interfere in its affairs, or even execute the laws within its boundaries, except through the county officers, all of whom (except one) are chosen by the people every three years. The exception is the *Fö Ispán* or Lord-lieutenant, the representative of Majesty, who is appointed directly by the Crown. Except at the triennial elections or on other great occasions, this officer generally resides in the capital; and the more important of his duties devolve on the elected *Vice Ispán* or *Al Ispán*, as he is more commmonly called at the present day. This magistrate answers in some respects to our sheriff; indeed, when Latin was used in our law transactions, both were called by the same title, *Vice-Comes*. In the absence of the Fö Ispán, the Vice-Ispán summons and takes the chair at all county meetings, corresponds with the central Government, an[illegible]'s decrees. It is through him also that the depu-

ties communicate with their constituents, and receive back their instructions. He holds the supreme direction of the provincial police, and presides as chief judge in the county courts, besides holding his own courts for the trial of minor offences, and small debt cases. A first and second Vice-Ispán are always chosen, in order that, in case of the illness or unavoidable absence of the one, the other may supply his place.

There can be few positions in society more honourable, or more to be coveted, than that of Vice-Ispán in Hungary. Chosen freely by the whole gentry of his county, possessed of immense power and influence, and exercising it among his own friends and neighbours, he enjoys all that to a healthy ambition can appear desirable. As a school for constitutional statesmen, I know of no office so good as this. It lays open a clear view of the wants and capabilities of the country, even to the minutest details; it places its occupant in the closest connexion with his constituents, keeps him in constant remembrance of his dependence upon them, accustoms him to public speaking, and initiates him into that *ars agendi*—that tact in the management of affairs —which nothing but a long continuance in office can give, and which is almost as necessary in the government of a country as commanding talent and just principles. It has accordingly been much sought after of late by young men of family, and I could name more than one hereditary magnate whose greatest pride is his election to the office of Vice-Ispán.

The municipal officers below the Vice-Ispán, and elected by the county, are the *Szolga-birok*, the Jurassores, the receivers of the state taxes, and receivers of the county taxes, collectors, fiscals, and others, besides a medical officer of health, surveyors, jailors, inferior officers of police, &c., who are elected for life. The most important of these is the *Szolga-biro*, or county magistrate. With the aid of the Jurati Assessores, or Jurassores, as Hungarian Latin makes them,—sworn men,—the Szolga-birok have the management of the separate districts (*Ke-rület*) into which each county is divided. Their duties extend to the administration of justice in trivial cases, the quartering of the soldiers, and the superintendence of the police within their districts.

All these officers receive a small annual payment during the period of their service, varying from 80*l*. the salary of the Vice-Ispán, to 10*l*. that of the Jurassor. It is not intended that this should be a remuneration for their services, but only a provision for the extraordinary expenses which their offices may bring upon them; it being especially stated that none but men "well-to-do,"

and capable of living on their own property, shall be appointed. No man, when chosen, can refuse to serve.

The advantages resulting from this system of elected county officers, and their consequent responsibility to public opinion, are so striking that I need not point them out; but some of its disadvantages may be less evident to those unacquainted with Hungary. In the first place, all these officers are elected by the people,—and be it recollected that in Hungarian that term excludes the peasantry,—and, from the short duration of their period of office, they are naturally anxious to please those on whom their re-election depends, and they are not therefore likely to be impartial in the administration of justice between electors and non-electors. But there is a still greater evil. From the payment, small as it is, by which these offices are accompanied, a number of needy men have been accustomed to seek them,—I allude particularly to the office of Szolga-biro,—and, from a mistaken kindness on the part of the electors, have not unfrequently succeeded. Now, although this may not prevail in all parts of Hungary,—and I have certainly seen Szolga-birok very wealthy and respectable men, yet in others, where the spirit of the institution has been departed from, and poor men have been appointed, the consequence has been that their poverty has laid them open to bribery in their quality of judges. To such an extent does this prevail in one part of the country, that I have heard the people speak of bribing the Szolga-biro as a matter of course. I remember in the district to which I allude, a Szolga-biro being pointed out to me as a most extraordinary man, because he administered justice fairly to the peasants, without ever accepting even a present from them. This, however, is not altogether a fault of the institution; nothing but a high-state of moral civilization in the country at large can ensure that strict honour in the judge, without which, the best of laws can never ensure justice: "*Nihil prosunt leges sine moribus.*" Something, perhaps, might be done by rendering the offices honorary, and so excluding the needy from them, or by raising the salary so high as to render its possessor beyond the power of slight temptations; but nothing would be so likely to produce the desired effect as a determination on the part of gentlemen of property and education to undertake the office of magistrate themselves, and so raise it, as with us, to be considered a mark of dignity and honour.

Four times at least in the course of every year, and oftener, if necessary, the Fö Ispán, or, in his absence, the Vice-Ispán, is obliged to call a public meeting (*Márkális szék—Congregatio*)

of all the nobles and clergy of the county. These meetings partake both of a political and municipal character. During the sitting of the Diet, it is here that the questions before the chambers are discussed; and, according to the vote of the majority, instructions are sent back to the deputies as to the manner in which they are to vote. Here, too, the wants and the "grievances" of the county are debated, and orders sent to the representatives to introduce bills to remedy them. They have the right of corresponding not only with other counties, but with foreign powers also; which right was exercised not long since in the case of the King of Bavaria. In short, the county meetings of Hungary are little less than provincial parliaments, and the deputies members of a confederation.

In their municipal or local character they have the management and direction of the means of communication, as the making of roads, cutting of canals, and the opening of rivers; they assess the taxes, and order the levies of soldiers voted by the Diet; they provide for the expenses of the county; assize the price of corn and meat;—in short, perform all the business which the government of the county can require. They have one privilege of a very extraordinary character, and which may be quoted as, perhaps, the greatest extent of power ever conferred on a popular assembly under any form of constitutional government. In the same manner as I have already stated, that the acts of the Diet are sent down to the counties to be published, so also are the ordinances of the monarch: but if, after due examination, these are found by the county meetings to be contrary to law, or in their tendency dangerous to liberty, they have "the right to lay them, with all due honour, on the shelf (*cum honore seponuntur*,) and take no further notice of them; a right which they have frequently exercised, and which is in itself a sufficient guarantee against any kind of administrative tyranny."*

Another of their privileges is of rather a curious nature; namely, the right of citing before them any noble who leads a scandalous life, and obliging him to reform, or expelling him from the county. I have heard of one instance of a married Count, who was known to be rather too intimate with a pretty widow of his neighbourhood, and who incurred this disagreeable censure.

But important as the county meetings are in their immediate effects, they are still more so in training the people to think of, and act in, the affairs of the country; and I am convinced it is to them we must attribute the fact, that, in spite of the censor-

* I quote from a very excellent article on Hungary, in the Athenæum of Nov. 1837.

ship of the press, in spite of their isolated position, and the many other disadvantages which they labour under, the Hungarians have sounder notions of politics, and a better acquaintance with their own real interests, than many of the so-called highly civilized nations of Europe.

There are few scenes better calculated to bring out the striking peculiarities of national character than a popular election; and the elections of Hungary are no exceptions to the rule. It so happened that I never was present at a *Restauration*, as an election is called; but, if I may credit those who have been, such a scene of feasting, fiddling, fuddling, and fighting was never equalled even in an Irish fair. A little country town, crowded during three or four days by three or four thousand noblemen, armed and accompanied by their followers, for the most part glorious with wine, their enthusiasm fired in the cause of a party or a name, and edged on by those little piquant animosities which near neighbours will indulge in, must present a scene of wild and stirring interest.

The restaurations, whether of the deputies or municipal officers, are commonly presided over by the Fö Ispán himself. In the case of the municipal officers, the king, in the person of his representative, has the right of *candidation;* that is, of naming three persons for every office, from among whom one must be chosen. In general, however, he nominates such as desire the honour, or who have a respectable party to support them; so that this power is rarely used except to exclude an unworthy person. Elections are now commonly made by acclamation, though polling has been used; Government having resumed what it calls the more ancient, certainly the more barbarous, mode, because it was thought that in the confusion the Fö Ispán might more easily decide upon the candidate most pleasing to the powers that be.

Never was scheme less successful. In the heat and enthusiasm of such a moment the influence of Government is lost; and the Hungarians have taught their lords-lieutenant to act with impartiality, by tossing out of the windows some who had shown a disposition to be partial. Should the numbers appear doubtful, the losing party have, within this last year or two, adopted the plan of demanding a poll, which the lords-lieutenant have not dared to refuse.

There is a good deal of similarity between these restaurations and the elections of members of parliament in England in former times; and though we have been right in changing the form under the plea of convenience for one less democratic, because newspapers supply the place of popular discussions, and party spirit is too active to prevent any possibility of indifference, the case

is far otherwise in Hungary. The enthusiasm of a popular assembly is required not only to stimulate the slow, and encourage the timid, among the friends of liberty, but to baffle by its power the hardihood of the agents of corruption.

It must be confessed that the excesses sometimes committed are rather startling,—only the year before our visit eight men were killed at a restauration in the county of Bars;—but they are certainly less than might be expected from an assembly of so many rude and often uneducated men of warm temperament, excited by wine and party animosity, especially when it is considered that there is no police to restrain them, and that they are for the most part armed. I can easily believe that to the well-drilled, well-policed slave of an absolute Government, such a meeting must appear very alarming; but by an Englishman, who has gone through the scenes of a contested election, it will be readily understood. Such a man has felt the blessings of Liberty, and can therefore easily overlook some of these outbursts of her wilder humours in consideration of the thousand blessings she showers upon him. He knows too that the political excesses of one tyrant cause more misery in a single year, than those of all the freemen of Europe in a century.

At these meetings it is wonderful with how much ease the Magyar, naturally eloquent, gives utterance to his burning thoughts and feelings in the sonorous tones of his much-loved mother-tongue. Word after word, and sentence after sentence, are poured forth without the slightest hesitation or difficulty. The election once over, and the Magyar forgets his anger. Both parties commonly meet, when the business of the day is concluded, without rancour or ill-will, at the table which the lord-lieutenant is obliged to provide for all comers. There again are speeches made,—thanks to the hot wines, yet more fluent than before!—toasts are drunk, healths are pledged, the national airs burst forth in all their native wildness from the gipsy band, and the sad-looking Magyar grows gay with the enthusiasm of the hour.

Of the municipalities of the towns in Hungary it is not necessary to say much; they are German in their origin, dependent in their principle. The municipal body consists of a *Senatus* and a *Község*. The *Senatus* answers to our court of aldermen, and is composed of twelve members, from among whom are chosen the *Polgár Mester*, or Mayor; the *Város Biro*, or Judge of the town; and the *Város Capitány*, or Commander of the police. The *Község* forms the Common Council, and consists, in Pest,

of one hundred and twenty members, from whom the members of the Senatus are taken. Both these bodies are self-elected, and, except the three superior officers, who are chosen annually, they retain their situations for life. So far there is a great resemblance between the constitution of Hungarian boroughs, and those of England before municipal reform; but a striking exception occurs in the manner of the election. It is a principle, which runs through every branch of the Hungarian municipal system, both in towns and counties, that the Crown shall have a direct controlling influence; and this it enjoys in the right of candidation. It is in this way, not only that the superior officers and Senatus are chosen, but every member of the Kozség itself. But, although it is true that the same principle of candidation prevails in the counties, its effect is totally different in the two cases. In the towns, from the small number of persons interested, rendering corruption or intimidation more easy: the long duration of the power delegated, making it more worth while to obtain it for a partisan; and, from another cause, to be explained by and by; the commissioner candidates whom he pleases, and would not hesitate in the least to omit the name of any person, however desired by the town, if his popularity or principles displeased him; so that in fact the whole municipal body may be—though I do not say that they always are—mere creatures of the Government. In the counties, on the contrary, where the elections take place every three years, and where the number of the constituency is often some thousands instead of a few score, the Fö Ispán dares not disobey the wishes of the meeting—thanks to the power of public opinion, and perhaps a little to those constitutional throwings out of windows to which we have before alluded! In fact, triennial elections, and an extensive constituency, seem to furnish—at least in Hungary—a strong barrier against intimidation and corruption.

The other cause for the subserviency of the towns is this;—To enable the Senatus to dispose of any part of the funds, exceeding in amount six pounds, furnished by the taxes which they are authorized to impose on the town to defray local expenses, or from the corporate property* in their possession, it is necessary that permission should be granted by the Crown. Now the Austrian Government makes it a point never to refuse any request made to it, if it is possible to avoid it,—I believe, if the Hungarians asked for the

* Though a citizen is not noble, and cannot possess landed property, a whole town by a fiction of law is considered equal to a noble, and so possesses land which it can sell to its citizens. In like manner, although a citizen cannot bring an action against a noble, the town *in corpore* can proceed for him.

moon, the Austrians would only reply that their request should be attentively considered—but they have a method of delaying to give an answer, which they know will break the spirit of the strongest petitioner in the world; and if a town corporation has ventured to send too liberal instructions to its deputy at the Diet, or has ventured to demur about choosing the nominee of the Crown as a member of the Község, a street may go unpaved, a bridge unbuilt, or a nuisance unabated for half a century, before they can get permission to expend their own money in doing it. The deputy again, although the Crown has no right of nomination in his case, either in town or county, must be chosen from among the senators, all of whom the royal commission has twice candidated. And now, too, the reader will understand why the nobles have deprived the borough members of their right of vote at the Diet; but although he may, perhaps, think them justified in so doing, he will not, therefore, the less lament that the wiser course of reforming the municipalities, by rendering them independent, was not adopted instead. I have no doubt the nobles have not done so, because they were convinced that the Crown would oppose them; but let them only fairly propose a municipal reform at the Diet, and promise to restore to the borough deputies all their rights if it is agreed to, and he would be a bold minister that dare counsel the Crown to reject it.

There is still one part of the municipal system to be considered,—that which refers to the local government of a village. Every Hungarian village forms a *Communitas* in itself, and is governed by its own elected officers, assesses and collects its own taxes, and manages its own affairs, very much after its own fancy. The Lord of the Manor, has, to a certain extent, the same power in the village as the Monarch in the county.

The chief officer of the village is the *Biro* or Judge: for this office the Lord nominates three peasants, from whom the villagers choose one. Here, too, it is generally understood that the Lord should nominate the three persons most desired; but in case he does not do so, and the peasants cannot decide in three days, the Szolga-biro of the districts appoints one himself, independently of both parties. The Biro must be able to read and write, and he is generally a man respected by his fellows for his character and acquirements. His salary, though small, is enough to make it worth his while to take the office; and he is freed from all obligation to labour for the Lord or the county during his continuance in office. The Biro's duties extend to the collection of the taxes, the furnishing the appointed number of conscripts for the

army, the quartering the soldiers on march fairly among the peasantry, the supplying horses for vorspann, the apprehending of rogues and vagabonds, the settling of disputes, and even the summary punishment of trivial offences. The Biro is aided by the *Notarius*, who keeps the accounts; by two *Jurassores*, who help him in his judicial functions, and must be present at every legal punishment; by the *Kis Biro*, or Little Judge; and by several Haiduks, who perform the duties of flogging-masters-general to the village. Except the Haiduks, all these officers are paid as well as elected by the peasants.

I have entered thus at length into the subject of Hungarian municipalities, partly beause it is a subject likely to excite great interest in England before long, and because I think we may borrow some useful hints from them; but more particularly because I believe that in them may be found the true bulwarks of Hungarian liberty. It is an extraordinary fact, that Hungary, though exposed for so many centuries to constant war,—though her throne has been occupied by men of genius, men born for power, and of despotic dispositions,—though aliens in blood, in language, and in interests, have swayed her destinies,—though princes, whose rule was absolute in all the rest of their dominions, have worn the crown of St. Stephen,—though a Maria Theresa would have coaxed the Hungarians into slavery under the name of civilization,—though a Joseph would have robbed them of their constitution with the promise of "liberty and equality,"—yet has Hungary retained to the present time her ancient rights and institutions unimpaired. Where are we to search for the eminently conservative principle which has thus enabled her to resist so many dangers? I believe it is in the decentralization of the municipal system. The quarterly county meetings, and the discussions which take place in them, have diffused a knowledge of constitutional principles, and created a habit of exercising them, which nothing has been able to break through. After the violent interruption which Joseph caused in their proceedings had terminated, the whole machine re-adjusted itself, its various parts reassumed their natural functions, and in a day the municipal government was re-constituted and in the performance of its duties, as though nothing had happened.

The manner in which the principle of decentralization has been carried out in Hungary, and rendered at the same time consistent with strength in the centre, is much more striking than in any other country of the old world. The local government, both of the counties and villages, administrative as well as executive,

rests entirely in the hands of officers elected by those most interested. The political power, too, will be found to rest partly in a centre—the Crown; partly to be disseminated through the provinces,—they having merely delegated an expression of their will, and not deputed a portion of their power to the Chamber. The executive is mixed in the same way; partly depending on the Crown through its officers in the capital, partly on the people and their elected officers in the country. The link of centralization, too, by means of the Lord-lieutenant and his power of candidation, and of decentralization, again, through the limitation of the executive in the provinces to the municipal officers, is very curious. Well may the Hungarians protest that they desire no revolution! Their ancient constitution maintained and carried out in its ancient form and spirit, modified only where it injures and oppresses the weak, would secure to them all the freedom which man can reasonably desire.

I have remarked that the assessment and collection of taxes is confided to the municipal officers; and it may be as well, therefore, in this place, to give some further information on the subject of taxation in Hungary. The taxes in Hungary are divided into two classes, the general and local, the Cassa Militaris, and Cassa Domestica.

The Diet has the right of voting the amount of the taxes belonging to the Cassa Militaris, and the duty of fixing the proportion which shall be borne by each county. In order to render the proportion more equal, the whole county has been divided into six thousand two hundred and ten *portæ;* and so much is voted *per porta.**

When the municipal officers have settled the distribution of this, and the amount which comes to the share of each village, the assessment on the individual peasants falls to the Biro and his

* The word *porta* was originally used, in 1342, to signify a gate through which a laden wagon could pass, such as is seen before every peasant's house. At this time a new finance system was introduced, according to which every porta which did not belong to a noble, a clergyman, a very poor peasant, a citizen;—he contributed separately,—the servant of a noble, or a peasant who followed his master to the wars, was obliged to contribute a certain sum yearly. This was afterwards adopted as the groundwork of assessments, and is continued to the present day; but although in time, as villages grew up and districts became inhabited, the number of gates increased, they still remained the same in the exchequer books; for it was found more easy to increase the amount of assessment than to make a new census. The revenue made up in this manner, now falls very unequally on some districts, while others escape tax-free. A new census has, however, been made, and a more equitable division arranged, which only waits for its formal adoption to be brought into use.

Jurassores. The common manner of dividing it is so much per head for every grown-up man; and then so much on each article of property,—as oxen, sheep, horses,—which he may possess. It is one of the great advantages of an elected officer, that those who elect him are commonly content with his manner of performing his duty; or, if they are not, the remedy rests with themselves. I do not recollect in other parts of Europe to have often seen the tax-gatherer and police-officers objects of respect to their neighbours; while in Hungary I never heard of a Biro being ill-regarded because he had performed his duty. It is a well known fact, that, when the peasant is perfectly unmanageable in the hands of the lord or his steward, he is at once obedient to his own elected Biro.

The whole amount of taxes thus collected it is difficult to ascertain. The sum voted by the Diet of late years for the Cassa Militaris has been 5,300,000 *f. c. m.* or 530,000*l.* This, however, is far from constituting the whole amount of revenue derived from Hungary. According to the best statistical work (*Neuste statistisch-geographische Beschreibung des Königreichs Ungarn, &c.* 1832,) at present existing, it would appear that from—

		fl. c. m.
	1. The crown and fiscal lands, the annual revenue is	1,200,000
Regalia.	2. Fron the tax on salt	20,000,000
(Royalties.)	The duty on exports and imports . . .	1,500,000
	Mines and mintage	1,096,000
	Post-office	500,000
	Fiscalities (probably sales of fiscal estates) .	306,400
	Subsidium Ecclesiasticum (paid by the bishops abbots, and provosts, for the maintenance of fortifications)	121,600
	Jews' toleration tax	160,000
	Sixteen Zipser towns	16,581
	Royal free towns	16,434
	3. Contributions from the peasants and citizens .	5,300,000
	4. Deperdita*	3,000,000
		33,217,015

or less than three millions and a half sterling.

* By *Deperdita* is meant the sum required to make up the losses sustained by individual peasants from supplying the soldiers with bread, corn, and hay, at a price much below the real value. It was, I think, in the reign of Maria Theresa that it was settled that Hungary should quarter sixty thousand soldiers; finding them in bread at the rate of one kreutzer the pound, hay at twenty kreutzers (eightpence) the cwt., and oats at twenty-four kreutzers the metzen, the ordinary price of such articles being very much higher. The difference between the real value and the fixed price of these articles, is partly made up to the peasant out of the county rates (which the peasantry at large pay,) and constitutes a very important part of the county expenditure under the head of "Deperdita."

It must be evident to any one who casts his eye over this list, and sees, in a country which enjoys the constitutional right of voting the supplies, that only one-sixth of the whole amount of revenue depends in any way on the will of the nation, while the other five-sixths are obtained without its consent, that some great departure from the original spirit of the constitution must have been made. Nearly two-thirds of the whole are derived from a tax on salt, not only levied without the consent of the nation, but in opposition to its remonstrances. Strongly, however, as the Diet has protested against this tax, and directly as it is opposed to the spirit of the constitution which every monarch at his coronation swears to observe, Government still obstinately maintains it, and probably will continue to do so till the nobles consent to bear their part in the burdens of the state.

To the foreigner it is of little importance whether Hungary pays more or less than her share of the general expenses of the Austrian empire; but, as it is a question which excites great interest amongst both Hungarians and Austrians, we must not pass it over in silence.

The surface of Hungary equals nearly the whole of the rest of Austria, and certainly includes by far the most fruitful if not the most productive part. The population of Hungary is about one-third that of the entire empire. Now, the whole revenue of Austria is said to amount to one hundred and twenty millions of florins, or twelve millions sterling; of which, as we have seen, Hungary contributes only three and one-third millions sterling—little more than one-fourth of the whole. Now, though I feel certain that Hungary does not contribute a fair proportion, and certainly much less than she might do, there is no doubt that the Hungarians are right in saying, that the fault lies with Austria, and not with them; for, under a more liberal commercial system, of which Hungary is deprived, on the plea of protecting Austrian manufactures, the duties on importation and exportation alone would amount to more than the whole sum collected at present. Besides, when such a comparison is made, it should be added that the expense of maintaining schools, the administration of justice, the payment of police, the maintenance of the clergy, &c., are all, in Hungary, provided for independently of the sum which enters the royal exchequer.

The Cassa Domestica, instead of being voted by the Diet, is voted by the county meetings, and is entirely devoted to the expenses of the individual county. The amount must of course vary in each county, according to the circumstances of the time, and the necessities of different localities. From this source are

derived the salaries of the municipal officers, the sums necessary for the maintenance and repair of bridges and roads, the erection of public buildings, and, till the present Diet, even the payment of the members of the Diet. The administration of the Cassa Domestica is entirely in the hands of the nobles, independent of the general government: it is entirely paid by the peasants. Here I know every English reader will be ready to join with me in execrating the selfishness—the flagrant and injurious selfishness—of the Hungarian nobles, which this fact discloses. That they should refuse to contribute to the support of a government which refuses them the right of regulating the expenditure of such contributions, every constitutionalist can understand; and that those who are themselves bound to defend their country should decline to pay others to do it, is also comprehensible,—of course supposing that they were capable of performing their duty;—but on what plea they refuse to take a part in paying the officers chosen by themselves from their own body, whose duties in many cases regard exclusively the nobility—by what right they can pretend to force others to build houses for them to meet in, bridges for them to pass over, or roads for them to travel on, is beyond the power of any honest man to imagine. Thank Heaven! the first step towards a great change has been already made. When Count Széchenyi obtained from the Diet an act for building a new bridge at Pest, and a power to make every one, noble or ignoble, pay as he passed over it, he gained as great a victory over prejudice and injustice as has been accomplished by any statesman of our day.

Some of the most enlightened Hungarians would gladly see this principle carried out to a much greater extent; and it is not improbable that Government would second them: but among many of the nobles, especially the lowest and highest, there is so great an ignorance and so strong a prejudice,—on the one hand against losing what they consider their rights, and on the other against raising the peasantry to think and feel like men,—that much must be done before this act of justice can be accomplished. The advantage which such a reform would confer on the peasants by relieving them from an unjust and irksome burden, on the country by the improvements which might then be undertaken in the means of communication, and on the nation at large by the encouragement of better feelings amongst all classes, and by the creation of a greater interest in preserving entire and free from foreign interference their municipal institutions, is incalculable, and worth any sacrifices to attain.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.



